

SPANISH TALES,

TRANSLATED

FROM LE SAGE,

AND

SELECTED FROM OTHER AUTHORS;

WHEREIN ARE CONTAINED

A DESCRIPTION OF MADRID, GRENADA, SARAGOZA,

SEVILLE, MILAN, PARMA, PALERMO,

&c. &c. .

BY

MRS. FREDERICK LAYTON.

“ In the gay morn of life, when all around
Seems, to the youthful eye, enchanted ground ;
When tempting novelty its witchery spreads,
And Fancy plays the devil with our heads ;
Then is the ardent hour of bold emprise,
Ere frigid caution makes us coldly wise.”

KEATE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR HATCHARD, PICCADILLY; BARRETT, BATH;
AND DEIGHTON, CAMBRIDGE.

HISTOR'
OF



ESTEVANILLE GONZALEZ.

VOL. II.

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

THE ancient and famous city of Pampeluna, the capital of Navarre, is the place where I was born; and I am descended from the House of Peralte, with which some of our kings have not disdained to form alliances. Don Francisco de Peralte, my father, as soon as I was old enough to enter the army, sent me to Italy, where I made my first entrance into life. I afterwards went into Flanders; whence peace, after some years of war, brought me back again into my native country. I led an idle life amongst other cavaliers of my age: hunting, gaming, tilting, and gallantry, formed all our amusements. However, though I saw many handsome women, I formed no particular

attachment. I played with the torch of Love without burning my fingers; but at last, the little god was amply revenged on me.

At Pampeluna great preparations were made to celebrate, with much magnificence, the birth of an heir to a noble family. Games of various sorts, and tournaments, were prepared; and all the young men of consequence were to contend for the prizes. Curiosity to see this spectacle attracted a vast crowd to the city, not merely from Navarre, but Castile, Biscay, and Arragon. Among others, there came from Burgos an old cavalier, named Don Gaspard de Honis; and with him, his daughter Donna Inez, who went to lodge at the house of their relation, Donna Juanna Ximenes, a rich widow, residing at Pampeluna. I had a sister, named Leonora, who was very intimate with Donna Juanna; and as these two ladies saw each other every day, Leonora became acquainted with Donna Inez, and they soon conceived a great friendship for each other.

My sister, delighted with her new friend, talked incessantly of the beautiful Castilian, ~~as~~ she called her. "My dear brother," she would often say, "Inez is very amiable, and her mind is equal to her person: she is also highly accomplished, and of a heavenly temper. Happy the cavalier who is to become her husband!" These words, which Leonora repeated incessantly, with enthusiastic rapture, made no impression upon me. Far from feeling any wish to see a woman so highly praised by another, I laughed at her eulogium; and told my sister, that this girl, whom she boasted so much about, had probably more bad qualities than good ones. In a word, the more she praised this beautiful Castilian to me, the less wish had I to see her.

Such was my indifference to women, although I had seen many very charming, my heart remained callous to love. But the day of the tournament arrived, the most unfortunate one of my life; and which I can never recall the remembrance of, without feeling my wounds bleeding afresh, and all the pangs

I have suffered still torturing my mind. I was at the entrance of the course, with my lance couched, waiting the moment of the onset; when, casting my eyes on the balcony where my sister was, I perceived a young lady talking with her, with whom I felt quite fascinated. " 'Tis Donna Inez," I immediately said to myself. I well remember the sensations I then felt: I found Love was revenging himself for the little attention I had hitherto paid the fair sex, and the mockery I had made of my sister's praises of her fair friend.

The wish that I had to shine in the eyes of this angelic creature, whom I began to love, animated me to such an excess, that I was conqueror of all, but myself. I gained the most distinguished honours of the day: I retired from the course, conqueror of my compeers, envied by them, admired by the softer sex; but, alas! I felt my own weakness, and found I was a vanquished captive. My sister, who was delighted with the applauses I received from all around, took pains to point me out to her friend,

and let her know who I was. The beautiful Castilian, out of politeness, partook of her pleasure, and congratulated her on having me for a brother. After the tournament, I asked my sister, Leonora, with eagerness, who the lady was I saw with her in the balcony? "It was Donna Inez," my sister said. "Well, Don Felix, what do you say to her? You have seen little of her, or you would be enamoured." "I have seen but too much of her," I said; "her beauty has dazzled me; or rather, I have felt all its power. Whilst you looked on me, in the course, as a conqueror, I own myself conquered by the daughter of Don Gaspard." "My brother," said Leonora, "I am not at all surprised that Donna Inez has inspired you with love; and I am happy it is in my power to serve you: the great friendship there is between us, makes me rely much on my influence with her."

I took advantage of the favourable disposition which I found my sister evinced towards me; and I got her to carry a letter for me, in which I declared my sentiments

to the beautiful Castilian in the most impassioned terms. I trusted so much to the influence of my sister, and the good opinion young men naturally have of their own merit, that I did not entertain a doubt but my letter would be well received: and, truly, the success I met with did not disappoint my expectation. "My brother," Leonora said to me, a few days after, "I have good news to tell you. I had, at first, some difficulty to get Inez to receive your letter; but at last, after much persuasion, she yielded. Donna Inez esteems you; and consents that you shall demand her in marriage of her father, when he returns from Biscay, where he is going on business, which will detain him two or three months. In the mean time, she is willing to receive your attentions, provided it be in secret: her reputation obliges her to this discretion, during the absence of Don Gaspard. She forbids you to sing verses under her window, or to serenade her with music: she interdicts all noisy gallantry. This is requiring great forbearance for a Spanish lover; but she allows

you to write to her, and even to hope to be honoured with an answer."

Leonora could well judge of the strength of my passion, by the violence of the transports of joy I threw myself into, as she proceeded in her communication; and I do not know, such was her great affection for me, if she did not feel as much pleasure as she occasioned me. The intervention of a sister, who had my interest so much at heart, was a great help to me. - I enjoyed with the beautiful Castilian, during two months, not only intercourse with letters, but even some nocturnal meetings, at a grated window, which looked into a narrow lane, at the back of her aunt's house. Hitherto, every thing prospered to my heart's content; every thing was favourable for me. But, though Love was strewing my path with flowers, jealous Fortune was preparing to make me miserable.

Don Gaspard returned from Biscay, and resolved to return to Burgos, with his daughter. I felt all the uneasiness that a

lover must feel, dreading to be separated from the object of her affections ; and Inez appeared to participate in my feelings. By good fortune for me, Donna Juanna, who loved her niece, would not consent she should be taken from her ; and so strongly pressed her to stay, that Don Gaspard, not daring to displease a rich sister, to whom his children were to be heirs, had the complaisance to leave her. I was hardly eased of the fear of losing Inez, when another cause of uneasiness arose. One day that Leonora, and many other ladies, were at the house of Donna Juanna, there came a courier into the room where the company were assembled : he gave a letter to the beautiful Castilian, who retired into the alcove, and opened the packet. While she was reading, my sister, who watched her, observed she seemed much pleased, and read through the letter with great satisfaction : moreover, Leonora observed that Inez, after reading the letter, called a servant, and whispered something in her ear ; to which the Abigail replied, in a tone loud enough to be heard, she

would advise her to follow her inclination.

When my sister repeated these words, and the remarks she had made, our comments were not very satisfactory to me. We supposed that I had a rival, who was not unhappy: all our conjectures led to that point; and the only thing we wanted to discover was, to find out the cavalier who disputed with me the daughter of Don Gaspard. To be able to ascertain that, we gained, by presents, Theodora, the servant of this lady; and we questioned her. She told us her mistress was beloved by Don Martin de Trevigno, one of the richest gentlemen in Biscay; and they wrote very often to each other. "I promise you," said the Abigail, "you shall see the answer she sends to the last letter of your rival; because all her dispatches go through my hands: it is I who give them to the courier."

I entreated Theodora to keep her promise, which she did not fail to do;

and behold what Inez wrote to her Biscayen.

"I am delighted you have, at last, obtained this title of Knight of St. James, which you have so long and so anxiously desired; and which has so long deprived me of the pleasure of seeing the only object of my affections. Do not doubt the joy I feel, at the hopes of so soon again seeing you: but remember, I forbid you to come to Pampeluna: I have my reasons. Go to Burgos, and use all your influence with my father to recall me, spite of all the reluctance my aunt has to part with me. I must avow to you, I am left here as the price of becoming her heiress. Adieu! may I find you as much and as deeply in love, as I am tender and faithful." INEZ.

I cannot describe to you what I felt, when I had read this letter, and found the terms the perfidious Inez was upon with Don Martin. I had need of all my sister's cool judgment, and tender affection, to keep me from instant destruction: but this prudent girl so well knew how to allay a troubled

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

mind, that, instead of allowing me to go, in the height of my fury, and overwhelm the coquette with reproaches, she persuaded me to dissemble. She did the same; and the daughter of Don Gaspard, imagining we were ignorant of what passed, behaved to us with the same allurements. Our endeavour was, which could best conceal their sentiments: I even went so far as to write to her in the same empassioned style; and she sent me answers more tender than ever.

Whilst we thus lived in this sweet intercourse of mutual deception, Don Gaspard arrived at Pampeluna. He came to take his daughter back to Burgos, where Don Martin was already arrived. But Donna Juanna still opposed the departure of Inez; and, for some reasons her brother could tell, she would never consent. Don Gaspard, not daring to act contrary to the dictates of a sister, who was a woman capable of revenging herself by making a will according to her caprice, ceased to oppose her. He did more: he gave up his house at Burgos, to

come and live with her at Pampeluna. Donna Inez would gladly have dispensed with her aunt having so much friendship for her; and, not doubting but her Biscayner would soon visit her, she foresaw some embarrassment in deceiving the two. However artful her mind was, she could not help feeling uneasiness; and I believe her uneasiness would have been much magnified, had she guessed I knew of her manœuvre.

Don Martin de Trevigno very soon appeared at Pampeluna, in great style. He had a smart carriage, and a number of footmen in rich liveries, and every thing suitable to a cavalier of his rank and fortune. I saw him, for the first time, in a church, where the daughter of Don Gaspard went to hear mass. As soon as I saw him, I trembled with rage. I thought he must be the formidable rival, of whom Theodora had spoken to me. He did not long leave me in doubt: he accosted Donna Inez with the air of a favoured lover; and the lady, although she saw I observed her, received him in a man-

ner to make me die with jealousy. Instead of constraining herself to spare me the agonies of witnessing her favours to another, she cast the kindest glances at him, and pierced me to the heart with the marks of love she lavished on him. When she went out of the church, he accompanied her quite to her aunt's, where he went in with her like a man who had the consent of Don Gaspard ; whilst I, full of rage and revenge, retired to my home, where I abandoned myself to all the cruel torments that can agitate a jealous mind.

However, Donna Inez, it appears, when she came to calm reflection, thought I could not have remarked with tranquillity the gracious reception she gave this Knight of St. James ; and she took the trouble in the evening to write to me, to acquaint me “ that the cavalier I had seen in the church ought not to give me any uneasiness ; that he was an intimate friend of her father, and, as such, she could not avoid receiving him with politeness : but all I saw was only

civility, and the duties of good breeding, in which the heart had no interest; that, in fact, the world contained but one object she was capable of loving, and that happy mortal was myself." This impudent attempt at still further deceiving me, enraged me so much, I determined to revenge myself. I disguised myself on that same night, and lay in ambuscade in the environs of the house of Donna Juanna, with the intention of attacking my rival, if I met with him. I was scarcely arrived at the gate, when a little page came out, who, approaching, asked me, quite in a low voice, if I was the Señor Don Martin? "Yes, my child," said I, in the same tone: immediately, the page put into my hands a paper, saying to me, that Donna Inez, his mistress, begged me to do what was mentioned in that letter: I assured him I would not fail, and gave him a double pistole; with which the blunderer went away, quite satisfied that he had so well acquitted himself of his commission. I returned directly home, burning with impatience to know what was

in the letter. I opened it and, found these words.

“ Yes, Don Martin, I keep to the promise I have made you to-day : I shall be to-morrow, at midnight, at the little garden gate.”

These words redoubled my fury ; and you may well imagine, that, breathing nothing but revenge, I passed a dreadful night ; that Aurora appeared to me slow in rising ; and the following day rolled along heavily, to my troubled mind. What do I say ? My patience was exhausted, when the hour arrived for which I waited so anxiously. As soon as it was come, I went with all speed to the little gate in the garden, and my rival came there directly afterwards. He advanced, to enter ; but approaching him, “ Stop, Don Martin,” said I ; “ know Don Felix de Peralte ; and know he came here to interrupt your enjoyment. The perfidious daughter of Don Gaspard has received me as a lover, in your absence : she has written many letters to me, in which she has plighted her faith to

me. To avenge myself of her ~~aisenooyi~~, I am come to deprive her of the tender interview that she promised to have with you to-night."

The Biscayner was offended with this address. "Don Felix," he replied, "you are very audacious, and very unjust at the same time, to endeavour to hinder me from speaking to a lady I have loved for six years, and by whom, I warn you, I am favoured. If it be to divert herself at your expense, that she has feigned to be pleased with your attention, I disapprove her conduct; a cavalier of your birth merits better treatment: but you must permit me to doubt that she would carry a feigned love so far, as to write to you. The cavaliers of Navarre are well known: these gentlemen boast themselves of favours from the ladies whom they have never even seen." "That is too much, Don Martin," I replied: "since you have dared to doubt I have received letters from Inez, this injurious doubt shall be the cause of our fighting, ere we part. Learn, that the

gentlemen of Navarre pay as much deference to truth, as those of Biscay."

In saying these words, I put my hand upon my sword; and the Knight of St. James as quickly drew his: we fought furiously on both sides; but Don Martin, for his misfortune, endeavouring to parry with his buckler a blow I gave him, managed so ill, that the sword entered in the front of his throat, and he fell dead at my feet. I left him extended on the earth; and going into the garden, where I found the gate open, I met Donna Inez, who was walking with Theodora, waiting for her Knight. "Ah, perjured wretch!" said I, going hastily up to her, "deceitful soul, devoid of faith! you shall deceive me no longer: I know your perfidy; and I came to revenge myself, by killing my rival. Would that you loved him a thousand times more than you have done, to overwhelm you with the most heart-piercing woe, in learning he is no more! Low lies the man of your heart, extended lifeless on the earth: behold

his much-loved remains ! Wretched be the remnant of your days ! may your heart for ever be incapable of love or consolation ! You are now punished for deceiving me, and I am revenged ; and still farther to console me for the necessity of flying far from my country and my kindred, I shall be far distant from you. Oh, perjured, perfidious wretch ! for ever, farewell !”

After having said these words with all the firmness a man was capable of who felt so highly enraged, I went out of the garden, where I left Inez fainted away in the arms of Theodora. I quickly gained my paternal roof ; where I was obliged to wake my father, to inform him of the mournful accident that had happened. He was very much surprised ; for he was, till that moment, ignorant of my attachment to the daughter of Don Gaspar ; and he was much chagrined, for he saw the necessity of my instant flight, through fear of falling into the hands of justice. Considering the evil was without remedy, he gave me a purse full of pieces of gold,

and some precious stones; and made me set out before sun-rise, mounted on his best horse. I traversed Navarre, and could not rest till I found myself at Barcelona. Immediately on my arrival, I embarked, without loss of time, in a Genoese vessel returning to Genoa.

As soon as I found myself in Italy, I became tranquil; and being in circumstances to travel in this beautiful country, I determined to survey it. After seeing what was most curious in Genoa, I hired a horse, having sold my own before I embarked; and going towards Lombardy, arrived at Milan, where I remained six months. Milan, the ancient capital of Lombardy, is the largest city in Italy, except Rome; but though it exceeds Naples in size, it does not contain above one half the number of its inhabitants. The cathedral stands in the centre of the city, and, excepting St. Peter's at Rome, is the most considerable building in Italy. It ought by this time to be the largest in the world, if what is related there

be true, that it is near four hundred years since it was begun, and there has been a considerable number of men daily employed in completing it ever since ; but the injuries which time does to the ancient parts of the fabric keep them in constant employment, without the possibility of their work ever being completed. No church in Christendom is so much loaded, I might say disfigured, with ornaments. The number of statues within and without is prodigious ; they are all of marble, and many of them finely carved. The greater part cannot be distinctly seen from below, and therefore certainly have nothing to do above. Besides those which are of a size and in a situation to be distinguished from the street, there are great numbers of smaller statues, peeping like fairies, from every cornice, and hid among the grotesque ornaments, which are here in vast profusion. They must have cost the artists who formed them much labour ; and are still a source of toil to strangers, who, in compliment to the person who harangues on the beauty of this church,

which he says is the eighth wonder of the world, are obliged to ascend to the roof, to have a nearer view of them.

This vast fabric is not simply encrusted (which is not uncommon in Italy), but entirely built of solid white marble, and supported by fifty columns, said to be eighty-four feet high : the four pillars under the cupola are twenty-eight feet in circumference. The finest statue is that of St. Bartholomew. He appears flayed, with his skin flung round his waist like a sash, in the easiest, most *dégagé* manner imaginable. The muscles are well expressed ; and the figure might, with great propriety, be placed in the hall of an anatomist ; but, exposed as it is to the view of people of all professions, and of both sexes, it excites more disgust and horror than admiration. The inside of the choir is ornamented by some highly-esteemed sculpture in wood. From the roof hangs a case of crystal, surrounded by rays of gilt metal ; and inclosing a nail, said to be one of those by which our Saviour was nailed to the cross. The treasury belonging to this

church is reckoned the richest in Italy, except that of Loretto: it is composed of jewels, relics, and curiosities of various kinds: but what is esteemed above all the rest, is a small portion of Aaron's rod, which is here carefully preserved.

The Ambrosian Library is said to be one of the most valuable collection of books and manuscripts in Europe. It is open a certain number of hours every day; and there are accommodations for those who come to read or make extracts. In the museum adjoining the library are a considerable number of pictures, and many natural curiosities. Among these they shew a human skeleton: this does not excite a great deal of attention, till you are informed that it consists of the bones of a Milanese lady of distinguished beauty, who, in her will, ordered that her body should be dissected, and the skeleton placed in this museum, for the contemplation of posterity. If this lady only meant to give a proof of the transient nature of external charms, and that a beautiful woman is not more desirable after death than a homely one, she might

have allowed her body to be consigned to dust in the usual way. In spite of all the cosmetics, and other auxiliaries which variety employs to varnish and renovate decaying beauty, the world has long been satisfied that death is not necessary to deprive the favoured fair of her beauty: the hand of Time will do much towards placing the homely, and the lovely on a level. Some beauty will, in spite of years, however, keep its advantages.

There is no place in Italy, perhaps it may be said in Europe, where strangers are received in such an easy, hospitable manner, as at Milan. In former times, the Milanese nobility displayed a degree of splendor and magnificence, not only in their entertainments, but in their usual style of living, unknown in any other country in Europe. At the present day, they are under a necessity of living at less expense; but they still retain the same obliging and hospitable disposition. The great theatre having been burnt down, there are no dramatic entertainments; but the company assemble every

evening, in their carriages, on the ramparts, and drive about till it is late. In Italy, the ladies have no idea of quitting their carriages at the public walks, and using their legs, as in France and England; and, from the number of servants, and the splendor of the equipages, which appear every evening at the Corso, on the ramparts, one would not suspect the extent of depopulation, and the diminution of wealth, which, we are assured, has taken place within these few years throughout the Milanese. Why are the inhabitants of the rich plains of Lombardy, where Nature pours forth her gifts in profusion, less opulent than those of the mountains of Switzerland? Because FREEDOM (whose influence is more benign than sunshine and zephyrs), which covers the rugged rock with soil, drains the sickly swamp, and clothes the brown heath in verdure; which dresses the labourer's face with smiles, and makes him behold his increasing family with delight and exultation; has abandoned the fertile fields of Lombardy, and fixed her abode among the mountains of Switzerland.

When I took leave of my father, we had agreed that I should write to him from every place where I made any stay ; and I addressed my letters to a monk of Pampeluna, a friend of his, who forwarded them to him. In this way we contrived to convey intelligence to each other. One letter of my father's informed me, that the daughter of Don Gaspar was so much affected with the death of Trevigno, that she had retired to a convent. At the same time, he informed me of a report, current in Navarre, that the brother of Don Martin, determined to revenge the death of Trevigno, had set out from Biscay ; and was seeking me from city to city. Although this intelligence caused me but little uneasiness, I thought it better to be always on my guard, to prevent surprise ; and I therefore changed my name, and let no one know what part of Italy I resided in.

Growing tired, at length, of Milan, I set out for Parma. At the end of the second day, I quitted a road, that might have led to an inn, to follow a bye-path ; through which, I at last arrived at a place overgrown with

thickets and brush-wood. I now attempted to find my way back into the road I had left : but this was another act of imprudence, for, instead of repairing my fault, I got entangled in a strait, where night surprised me, and I had no alternative but to wait patiently the return of day. I accordingly dismounted, and, unbridling my horse, suffered him to graze at discretion : I then threw myself upon the grass, hoping that a long sleep would supply the want of food.

I was just beginning to close my eyes, when I heard a dismal cry of birds, of ill omen, accompanied at intervals by a plaintive voice of a person seemingly in distress. I arose to discover the cause of these noises ; and, walking onward, I at length perceived, by the feeble light of the moon, overcast with clouds, an edifice, that had the appearance of a chapel in ruins. As I advanced to examine it more distinctly, I again heard the noise that had at first alarmed me. Sometimes the ruin resounded with the cries of owls and daws ; and sometimes I plainly

distinguished the moans of a female in distress.

The wish I had to unravel what seemed to me an extraordinary occurrence made me enter this ruin, not altogether without fear; for the most intrepid man in my situation could not be without it. I proceeded, with my drawn sword in my hand, amongst the ruined arches of the chapel; and at length arrived at a sort of tomb, whence, all at once, proceeded these words, accompanied with sighs and groans: "*O unhappy woman! why are you doomed to suffer such cruel torments?*"

I must confess that these words almost overpowered me with dread; my mind felt confused; and I imagined that this must be a soul in purgatory. Nevertheless, trembling and agitated as I was, it did not prevent my answering the voice I had heard; but it was done in a manner that plainly shewed the disorder of my senses. "Immortal spirit!" said I, "you, who released from the ties of the body, expiate in this monu-

ment the faults you committed whilst you were enveloped in matter, tell me if I can be of any use to you? I am ready to do whatever you order.”—“Ah, traitor!” replied the voice, “you are not content with having shut me up in this dreadful tomb, but you must add mockery to your cruelty: the lingering and inhuman death that awaits me in this horrible sepulchre is not enough to satisfy your rage and revenge.”

At this answer, which gave me to understand that I had to do with a living person, reason resumed its empire over me. My fear was at an end; and I said to the afflicted female, “Know, whoever you are, that I am not the author of your misfortune. You speak to a traveller, who, having lost his way, was preparing to pass the night upon the grass, a few paces hence. I heard a noise in this ruin, and came to learn the cause of it. The first words I heard confused my understanding: I took you to be a troubled spirit, and therefore exorcised you; but the answer you returned has undeceived me: I shall be consoled for having

lost my way, if I can be of service to you. Lose no time in getting out of this frightful place, and follow me. I have a horse at the door of the chapel; and I will convey you wherever you may think proper."

"Señor," replied the lady, "I cannot get out of this tomb unless you will help me: I am tied with cords; and I have no part at liberty but my tongue, which I will employ, the rest of my life, to thank Heaven, that brought you this way." I immediately approached the monument; and found, in fact, a woman with her hands and feet tied with cords: but what was the horror I felt when I found her bound to the dead body of a man! I startled back at the sight. "Generous unknown," said the lady, "separate, I beseech you, the dead from the living, and release me quickly from the dreadful object to which I am attached. Destroy this work of furious jealousy."

I judged, by these last words, that the deplorable state in which I found this unhappy woman was some new Italian way of

punishing an unfaithful wife: but a brave man never hesitates to help a person in need of his assistance. I therefore approached the lady; and using my sword to cut the cords, I released her from the corpse; then leading her out of the ruin, I conducted her to the place where my horse was grazing. Day breaking soon after, I mounted her behind me, and, following a bye-path, without knowing where it led, we arrived in a short time at Betala. "I now know," said the lady, who had hitherto kept a profound silence, "where we are. The house I wish to retire to is only two miles hence." "Señor," said she, pointing with her finger to a road not much beaten, "go that way, if you please, and we shall reach, in less than an hour, a farm, where you will be received by people grateful for the service that you have done me: it is into the arms of my father and mother that you will conduct me. Oh Anselm! Oh Dorothy!" exclaimed she, bursting into tears, "unhappy authors of my birth! what will be your sorrow, when you learn the unjust and cruel treatment that your daughter has received!" This apostrophe was followed

by so many sighs and tears, that I could not help feeling compassion for the lady; although I had strong doubts on my mind, whether, in delivering her, I had snatched from death a victim altogether innocent.

We found, at the door of the farm-house, an elderly man and woman; whom I soon found to be Anselm and Dorothy. They did not immediately recollect their daughter, and were excessively surprised at the sight of her. "Good Heavens!" exclaimed the father, "it is Lucretia! *You* here, without your husband! Why is *he* not with you?" Lucretia made no answer; but burst into a flood of tears, and was plunged in the deepest affliction. "I see plainly," said the mother, "that my kinsman has been guilty of some outrage." The groans of the young lady redoubled at these words; and all her grief was renewed. Anselm and Dorothy seeing that she was incapable of giving a recital of what had befallen her, addressed themselves to me, to entreat I would inform them, if possible, the cause of her grief. I therefore related to them as much as I

knew of it; and added, that I was ignorant of the cause of her husband's cruelty. During my recital, which the good people heard with horror, Lucretia became more tranquil, and, recovering her power of speech, gave us her history, which, for ought I know, might be nothing more than a romance, in her own justification.

“ Aurelio, my husband,” said she, “ is the most jealous man in Italy, and capable of carrying his fury to the most violent extremes. He suspected me, I cannot tell on what appearances, of being too much taken with a handsome young man, one of our servants. Under this impression, having first stabbed the unhappy youth, he bound us together with cords, and, with the assistance of one of his men, carried us, in that state, to the place where this generous cavalier found me.”

Anselm and Dorothy could not but reproach themselves for having united their daughter to Signor Aurelio, whose character they well knew; and felt the most lively

grief at hearing this story. They mixed their tears with those which Lucretia began to shed afresh, and were convinced of her innocence; when she said, "You may well imagine I should not dare to appear before you, if I had any thing to reproach myself with: far from daring to throw myself into your arms, I should fly my paternal roof: I should go to the end of the world, to hide my shame, for having acted so unworthy of the education you bestowed on me."

The father and mother giving full credit to their daughter's words, reproached themselves for having married her so unfortunately, and received her with all possible tenderness and affection. They gave me a thousand thanks for having saved, by my generous assistance, their only child from inevitable death, and invited me to remain some time at their farm; but I would only remain there one day; after which, having learnt the road to Parma, I took leave of them, and pursued my journey.

Parma is a beautiful town, defended by a citadel and regular fortifications. The streets are wellbuilt, broad, and regular. The town is divided unequally by the little river Parma, which loses itself in the Po, ten or twelve miles from this city.

The theatre is the largest in Europe; consequently much larger than there is any occasion for. It is observed that the construction, is so favourable to the voice, a whisper from the stage is heard throughout the building.

Corregio, although born in the State of Modena, passed most of his life at Parma, and adorned several of the churches with his immortal pencil. The cupola of the cathedral, the painting of which has been so greatly admired for the grandeur of the design, and the boldness of the foreshortenings, is, of all his efforts, the most admired. Some of the best pictures in the Ducal palace have been removed to Naples; but the famous picture of the Virgin, in which

Mary Magdalen and St. Jerom are introduced, still remain.

The Duchies of Modena, Parma, and Placentia, are exceedingly fertile. The soil is naturally rich; and the climate being moister here than in many other parts of Italy, produces more plentiful pasturage for cattle. The road runs over a continued plain, among meadows and corn-fields, divided by rows of trees, from whose branches the vines hang in beautiful festoons. I had the pleasure of remarking, as I rode along, that the peasants here are not deprived of the blessings of the smiling fertility amongst which they live: they had all a neat, contented, and cheerful appearance.

I had only been three days in Parma, when I met with an adventure that had liked to have been the last of my life. One evening, after supper, leaving my hotel to walk about the city, and having the curiosity to know if the lovers at Parma

sung their pains and pleasures, during the night, under the balconies of their mistresses, as in Spain, I sauntered about till past eleven o'clock, without hearing the sound of a guitar ; when, all of a sudden, my ears were struck with the sound of voices and instruments. I advanced to the place whence the music proceeded ; and, perceiving it was given in the Spanish style, I made no doubt that it was a cavalier of my own nation, who was entertaining the lady he loved with a serenade. I stood listening some time with great pleasure ; when suddenly the music ceased, and a clashing of swords succeeded to the sound of the violins ; and a moment after, I perceived a man defending himself against three others, who had fallen on him with great impetuosity. The inequality of the combat offended me. I drew my sword, and, running to the aid of the cavalier, who must inevitably have fallen under the blows of so many enemies, I seconded him so well, that we obliged his enemies to retire with many wounds ; which they probably

would not have received, if I had not made myself one of the party.

The cavalier shewed himself very grateful for the service I had rendered him, and loaded me with thanks and acknowledgments. "Señor," said I, in the Castilian language, "what I have been able to do for you, is not deserving of so many thanks. Could I see with indifference one of my own countrymen in danger? for I presume you are a Spaniard."—"You are not mistaken," said he; "I am of Biscay; and my name is Don Gregorio de Trevigno. And you," continued he, "what province of Spain were you born in? Tell me, I entreat you, to whom I am under so great an obligation."—"Excuse me," said I, "from satisfying your curiosity. When you know who I am, you will probably feel sorry that you are under any obligation to me."

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Biscayner, "are you Don Felix de Peralte?"—"Yes," answered I: "you see before you the man who killed your brother at Pampeluna,

and whom you are seeking in Italy. Chance, or perhaps I may say Heaven, has brought about our meeting at this moment. The assistance you have received from my arm is a snare, that Fortune has laid in your way, to snatch me from your vengeance: but I will not escape you: let not the service I have rendered you be put in the scale: think only of the injury you have sustained: revenge the death of a brother.”—“ If you were in my place,” interrupted Don Gregorio, “ would you do so? Speak: I will act by your advice.”—“ You have placed me,” I replied, “ in a very embarrassing situation. Had you killed my brother, and I were indebted for my life to you, I believe firmly that my gratitude would overpower my resentment.”—“ Well, then,” replied he, “ would you have me act in a contrary manner? Do you think I have less delicacy than yourself on this subject? No, Don Felix, I know what honour exacts from me in such a conjecture: blood has no longer need to cry for vengeance: I no longer consider you among the number of my enemies.

You have yourself repaired the injury you have done to my family ; since the same sword that cut short the days of Don Martin, has preserved those of Don Gregorio : so I here offer you my hand, and entreat you to accept it."

From this moment, Don Gregorio and myself contracted the warmest friendship for each other. We exchanged addresses : we both rose early the following morning, with the mutual intention of paying the first visit. We met by the way ; and after the first compliments were over, he told me he wished to introduce me to a nobleman at Court, with whom he was intimate. We therefore set off to the house of Count Guadagni, a favourite of the Duke, and first gentleman of his chamber, to whom he presented me, saying : " This, my Lord, is Don Felix de Peralte, that mortal enemy whom I was seeking everywhere, to cut his throat. He is now one of my best friends." — " By what miracle," inquired the Count, with surprise, " is this great alteration brought about ? " Don Gregorio then

related our adventure to him; avowing, that, without my assistance, he should have lost his life. The Count, after hearing this detail with much attention, congratulated us upon an event by which we were so happily reconciled, and thus terminating an affair of honour, which might, in all probability, have been fatal to one of us.

Guadagni thought this incident worth repeating to the Duke, his master, who wished to see and converse with me out of curiosity. I had the happiness to please the Prince; who, to keep me at his Court, made me a lieutenant of his guards. His favourite also conceived a friendship for me; so that I had reason to flatter myself that I should one day make a most brilliant fortune. The intelligence I had now to communicate to my father gave him great delight. In his answer, he confessed to me, that he had never before received a letter which gave him so much satisfaction.

I now used my utmost endeavours, to

make myself pleasing to the Duke ; and I advanced so rapidly in the good graces of this prince, that I succeeded, in less than two years, to the place occupied by the Count de Guadagni, which became vacant by his death. You may well imagine, that the elevation of a stranger to the important post I held at Court, was not beheld without uneasiness. Envy set all those noblemen against me who thought themselves worthy of filling it ; who leagued together, to destroy me in the estimation of their master. No pains nor artifices were left untried to accomplish it ; but all their efforts proved ineffectual. I may even say, that the more they strove to injure me in the Duke's favour, the more firmly I became rooted : indeed, it was not easy to destroy the confidence of a prince, whose vices and virtues were so well known to me. Guadagni, by this knowledge, had always kept himself in favour ; and I hoped that I should not be less expert than he. In effect, I found the secret art of making myself so necessary to the Duke, that he no longer saw but with my eyes. Never

had a favourite greater ascendancy over a master. They called me the Co-adjutor of the State of Parma.

All the courtiers then gave way to my influence ; but my power was balanced by a female, for whom the Duke had a most violent passion—the Marchioness of Origo, wife of his chief equerry, was the formidable person. Although she was not in the prime of life, she was, nevertheless, the most fascinating beauty of the Court, as she was also the most artful. When first she saw the Duke entangled, she formed the design to estrange him from me, to have the sole dominion over him herself ; as, on my side, I prepared to alienate him from her : such ever being the ways practised by the mistresses and favourites of the great. To bring this about on both sides, we began with doing all the ill offices in our power to each other. When I was with the Duke, I seized every opportunity of speaking with malignity of her ; and when she was with him, she inveighed with equal malevolence against me. This privilege,

who really had no other fault than being too good, was therefore too ignorant of the wickedness of others, and was little prone to suspicion. Sometimes he was influenced by what the Marchioness said, and sometimes believed what I told him. Imagine a ship, tossed about by contrary winds, which sometimes yields to one, and sometimes to the other. My formidable rival was not averse to the pleasures of the world: she was suspected of not being more faithful to the Duke, her lover, than she was to the Marquis, her husband. I prepared my batteries on this side: I set spies to observe her, whom I paid well, and they served me well; they informed me that the lady was become infatuated with a comic actor of the name of Octavian, the first performer in the prince's company; and that not satisfied with making him come almost every day to her toilette, she sometimes was so obliging as to go to him of a morning, in a hackney-coach, disguised like a woman of the town: in short, it was impossible to doubt this was a criminal connection.

This report gave me great pleasure; but before I attempted to draw any advantage from this discovery, I determined to ascertain the truth. To effect this, I went and called upon Octavian, and engaged him to sup tête-à-tête with me; saying, I had an affair of the utmost consequence to speak to him about. "Octavian," said I to him, when supper was over, "I have very fatal intelligence to communicate to you. The Duke knows what a violent attachment the Marchioness of Origo has for you, and that you often have private meetings with her."

The comedian turned pale at this discourse, and trembled. Excellent actor as he was, he was completely disconcerted. I did not fail to observe his confusion, and I continued to converse on the same topic. "You know," said I, "that I am your friend; I have given you proofs more than once before of that, and I will give an additional proof now, in giving you good advice. I tell you what I would do in your place: I would go and throw myself at the feet of the prince, and frankly avow all to

him. You know his goodness; a frank and sincere avowal will appease his anger. I am sure he will pardon your not being able to resist the advances of so handsome a woman. I will undertake to present you to his Highness, and even to speak in your favour."

Octavian had too much sense not to suspect such advice, given by a man whom he knew, was the mortal enemy of the Marchioness of Origo; perhaps he even saw through the malice, and thought I only advised him to take so delicate a step, to have a proof of what I had only suspicion: upon which he resolved to deny having ever had the assurance to dare to think of a woman of the exalted rank of the Marchioness; and he was equally sure she had no thoughts of him. However, nothing was more true, and I was fully convinced of this two days after.

One of my spies came to tell me, as I was getting up, that the Marchioness Origo, in a hackney-coach, and in her usual dis-

guise, was gone to visit Octavian ; and if I came there, I should see her come out. I dressed myself in haste, and followed the spy, with whom I hid myself a few paces from the house of the comedian. We soon perceived the lady, whom I recognised immediately, spite of her disguise ; but to make myself more sure of the fact, I joined her, and lifted up the veil she had covered her face with : she exclaimed with astonishment, at seeing me : I would have apologised to her, pretending I took her for another ; but she flounced away from me, without speaking a word, got into the carriage which was waiting for her, and disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.

Charmed at being able to ascertain myself that she had been to Octavian, I ran to the palace with an air of triumph, to relate to the Duke what I had seen. Unhappily, he was just gone out, and did not return for two hours. On returning, he observed the emotion of my countenance : “ What is the matter with you,” said he, “ you seem agitated ? ” “ My lord,” I replied, “ your

Highness is too dear to me, not to feel indignant at the treason against you." "Speak more intelligibly," said he; "Who betrays me? and what perfidy has been done?" "The Marchioness," I replied, "is unfaithful, and you ought to abandon her. The ungrateful woman, forgetting what she owes to the love you honour her with"—"Peralte," interrupted the prince, looking at me with an angry eye, "take care what you say: see as you ought to do: your hatred poisons all the actions of the Marchioness, and you condemn her on the slightest suspicion. What new crime has she committed now, to deserve the appellation of unfaithful and ungrateful?" "I wish I could bestow upon her yet more odious names," said I; "she has been this morning to the house of the Comedian Octavian, in a hackney-coach, and disguised as a common woman. I saw her come out of the house of this buffoon, where love takes her very often.

"What calumny!" exclaimed the Duke.
"How can any one impute such degrading

conduct to the Marchioness? Happily for her, I know her innocence, and the falsehood of your accusation. I am just now come from this lady's house; who is ill, and has even been bled this morning: they have taken three porringers of blood from her, which are set upon the table in her apartment. What will you say, if I shew it you?" "I shall say," I replied, "that the blood is not hers, and it is only a trick she has contrived, to contradict my accusation." The prince accused me of obstinacy; and replied, to some things which I urged against the accused, that they were invented by the accuser.

To know all about the porringers of blood, I ordered my spies to find the surgeon who attended the Marchioness's family, and to bring him to me. This was soon done. "My friend," said I, to intimidate him, "the Duke orders you, under penalty of perpetual imprisonment, to own if you have this morning bled the Marchioness Origo." The surgeon turned pale at these words, and answered with

a fearful accent, "There is no need to threaten me, to make me obey the orders of my sovereign: and for answer to your question, I have to say, they came to me from the Marchioness Origo this morning, to go and bleed one of her women: I have been there: I have taken three porringers of blood from the waiting-woman, and I came away." "It is not then the Marchioness you have blooded?" "No truly," said he, "I have not even seen the lady."

"Upon the report of the surgeon, I assured the Duke that the three porringers of blood had not been taken from the veins of his mistress; who had only told him she had been blooded, and was ill, to make him suppose it impossible that she had been that morning with Octavian, in the state he then found her. The prince, whose love blinded him, could not imagine her capable of such deceit. "It must be," exclaimed he, "the Marchioness is a great wanton, to have recourse to such ways: it is what I will soon unravel to the bottom. I will see her arm: if there be not there

the mark of the lancet, I will believe all you have told me; and I will break for ever with the coquette. But Peralte," added he, with a threatening air, "if there is, be assured I shall avenge the lady for your rash condemnation." "I submit to all sorts of punishments," I said, "if she has an arm fresh cut;" so much was I persuaded, she would content herself with saying to the Duke she had been blooded.

He returned in the evening to her, under pretence of being anxious to be informed, in person, of her health. I cannot tell you what conversation passed while they were together; but when I presented myself next morning before the prince, he looked at me with a chilling eye. "Peralte," said he, "the Marchioness has been blooded: it is a certain fact: I have removed the bolster from her arm, and I have seen the mark. I will not have you any longer trouble my repose with accusations full of falsehood: and I had rather that a mistress should deceive me, than owe her fidelity to the care of watching over her."

At this discourse, which confounded me and struck me dumb, I judged, either that the surgeon had not spoken truth, or else the Marchioness had a vein opened by another. The Duke put a bad construction on my silence; and looking on me as a false accuser, who, finding himself detected, had only silently to own his guilt, turned his back to me, and sent to me, by the Captain of the Guard, not to appear any more at Court. I felt, at first, I own, my disgrace very strongly; and I had a mortal chagrin to be the dupe of a woman, whom I had flattered myself to have disgraced. But I called religion to my aid; which made me see with another eye, the situation that I had occupied: and Heaven even interposed to inspire sentiments that, by degrees, detached me from the world. I bade adieu, then, to the Court of Parma, and went to the city of Genoa; where I did not long wait for an opportunity to return to Spain. I embarked in a vessel freighted for Alicant; where being happily arrived, I bought a horse, and took the road to Pampeluna. I passed, like you, one evening near this

hermitage; and asked for a lodging, not knowing the country. They opened the door to me, and I was received by a hermit of fourscore; who walked without a stick, and enjoyed perfect health. He gave me the same fare I have given you, and held conversation with me, which completed my determination to renounce the world. To tell you the rest, in two words, I entreated the old man to allow me to live with him, in this solitude. He consented; I remained here; and from that moment determined to think only of my salvation. I buried myself in this hermitage: I did not even go to Pampeluna: the pleasure of seeing again my father and sister, were the first sacrifices I made to God. I passed here twenty years with the Hermit; and it is ten years since he died."

The Recluse here finished his recital: I thanked him for his complaisance, and said with a smile, that I felt myself tempted to follow his example. "You are yet too young," he replied, "to embrace such a sort of life; which requires a man sickened

of the pleasures of the world. A person should be well acquainted with the world, when they quit it. It is the want of having this knowledge, and consequent disgust, which fill our cloisters with discontented monks.

I got up next morning at break of day; and having bid adieu to my host, after thanking him for the kind reception he had given me, I mounted my horse, and, turning towards Saragoza, arrived there by noon. I found the Governor and his daughter conversing in the parlour, with the Bishop of Salamanca. As soon as they saw me, they all began asking questions at the same time : “ How have you left my kinsman ? ” “ Tell me news of my nephew.” “ In what state have you left my husband ? ” “ Gentlemen, Madam,” I answered, “ my master enjoys perfect health ; and concerning the treatment he receives from the Bishop of Albarazin, here are his letters, which will give you an ample detail.” At these words, I took the letters out of my pocket, and delivered to each one their dispatch.

I imagined they would content themselves with a pretty long detail, that Don Christoval had given them, of all the attentions and affectionate treatment he met with at Rodenas : but that was not the case. They had me in again, to question me : they made me give them the most minute particulars of our journey ; and even to give them an exact description of the castle of the Bishop of Albarazin. I was not even let off with that ; for, after dinner, Donna Anna would have me called to a private conversation with her. “ Well, Gonzalez,” said she, “ if you have made a faithful report to us, as I do not doubt you have, your master must be very well satisfied to find himself in a retreat so very delightful, and where nothing is thought of but how to make time pass pleasantly with him. I am convinced, with the assistance of all the amusements that they procure for him at Rodenas, he supports my absence very well.” “ Ah, Madam !” said I, “ have a better opinion of the power of your own attractions, and do more justice to a husband who adores you. Do not imagine that any amusements have the power

to make him forget such a wife as you. He thinks of nothing but his dear Donna Anna: you are always present to his mind. Estevanille," he said to me at my departure, "I envy your happiness: you will see Donna Anna, whom Heaven, in anger, decrees I must be separated from."

The lady smiled, hearing me speak in this way. Afterwards, assuming an air of tenderness, "Do not deceive me, Gonzalez," said she; "is it really true that Don Christoval counts the days of our absence?" "The days, Madam," I cried; "ah! rather say the moments: he would sink under the weight of absence, if God did not give him strength to support it." Truly, I gilded the pill a little; for, although my master was very fond of his wife, he was not a man to die of melancholy, because he was absent from her.

"Don Christoval," said the lady, "will soon return to Saragoza: at least, I flatter myself with that hope. My father has already had two conferences with the prin-

cial relations of Don Melchior Rida. They are all persuaded that this cavalier has justly drawn his misfortune upon himself; and they seem disposed to accommodate matters." And, in fact, the Count of Villamediana and the Bishop of Salamanca managed so well, that they soon settled the business, and sent me back with this good news to Rodenas. Don Christoval was too well aware of their anxiety to see him again, to make any long stay at the castle. He took leave of the Bishop of Albarazin, making to him all the acknowledgments due to his hospitality, and returned with great joy to Saragoza, where he found a wife who loved him as tenderly as he loved her.

His return caused great joy to the Governor, who made new entertainments; and the young couple enjoyed at their leisure the sweets of matrimonial happiness. After two months of rejoicing, the Bishop of Salamanca returned to his diocese, with his nephew and niece. We travelled, by short journeys, through Old Castile; and we stopped at the castle of Rodiliana, which

is at the entrance of the province of Leon, and which belongs to our bishop. Here we remained three weeks ; during which time, all the nobility of the neighbourhood were very sociable with us. As they knew my lord to be a person who liked to see the great world at his table, the most inferior of the Hidalgos came every day to dine at the castle, with a plume in the hat, and a long rapier by the side. They presented themselves in all their magnificence before his Grace, who received them with a politeness that abundantly flattered their vanity. At last, we set out for Salamanca, and had the pleasure of once more beholding that fine city. The appearance of it, a few miles distant, is very striking. Its lofty towers and cupolas, the grand Gothic cathedral, numerous convents, and magnificent bridge over the winding Torines, form an assemblage of objects truly grand. The country, on the left hand of the river, is an extensive common, covered with numerous flocks of sheep ; the right is laid out in corn-fields. In the distance are some of the loftiest summits of the Guadarama mountains. This

is a striking scene of the sublime, both in Art and Nature ; and all that is wanting to complete the beauty of the surrounding country is foliage. After crossing the bridge, the road goes under an old Roman arch, by a steep ascent, into an intricate maze of dirty narrow streets, the principal of which passes by the cathedral, the first object of interest in the place :—near to this stands the episcopal palace, to which we all returned with great joy, and had a renewal of some weeks' entertainments, for all the neighbourhood to see and congratulate the happy couple.

BOOK IV.

WHEN I quitted the palace of Salamanca, had any one predicted that I should return there in six or seven years, in a superior situation, I should have thought they were making a jest of me : but they would have said no more than was accomplished. I was become the secretary of a nobleman who was attached to me ; and officer of the household of the Bishop, upon a far different footing than I was there before ; for I no longer associated with the livery-servants : I was on the same level with the almoners, the equerries, the gentlemen, and the valet-de-chambre ; and I dined at the steward's table, which was as well served as that of the Bishop himself.

Vanegas was the first person I went to see. I found him the same as when I left

him ; that is to say, lay-clerk at the cathedral. After we had cordially embraced each other, he looked at my clothes, which were all of the best sort ; and observing that I had a handsome sword by my side, silk stockings, fine linen, and beaver hat, he stood staring and gaping with surprise, and asked me if I had made my fortune since our separation. Upon which I gave him an account of my voyage to Italy, and my adventures there ; and concluded with describing my now happy situation. He congratulated me from the bottom of his heart. " Persevere, my friend," said he : " I perceive that you are in the high road to preferment ; you have attached your fate to that of Don Christoval de Gaviria : he is an amiable nobleman. A permanent establishment cannot fail to be the reward of your attachment. I am pleased to see fortune so favourable to you."

" And you, Señor Vanegas," said I, " are you still a chanter ? It seems to me, that a person of your merit has a right to aspire to higher dignities. Have you not got a

step higher, to enable you to reach superior situations in the church?" "No," said he; "I do not resemble the generality of priests, who pass their lives in seeking for benefices, never satisfied with those they have. I am, thank Heaven, neither avaricious, nor ambitious. Satisfied with my situation, poor as it is, I never trouble myself about getting a better. I will tell you more: there is vacant now, in our cathedral, by the death of the licentiate, Baptist Leon, a prebend, in the gift of the Bishop; and to which I might aspire. But as, in order to obtain it, I must take the trouble of seeking friends to speak to the Bishop, and humble myself in a manner that does not suit my humour, I like better to give it up with a good grace. After all, I have enough to live upon, frugally; and that ought to satisfy an ecclesiastic.

I admired the moderation and good-nature of Vanegas; and I applauded his opinions, without letting him know that I had any thought or wish to make him alter it. Indeed, I had no great reliance upon

my own interest at the palace ; but I was not willing that the appointment should be lost to a friend whom I so highly valued, without making an effort to serve him. I therefore addressed myself to Don Christoval, and spoke to him of the vacant prebend: I entreated him to ask his uncle to bestow it on Vanegas, to whom I was under great obligations. " I am much pleased," said my master, " to see that you remember your friends, when you have an opportunity of serving them : it is what all the world ought to do. I will willingly ask what you wish : but why not go yourself to my uncle, to ask this favour ? I am sure it will give him pleasure to grant your request. I know he values you. You have no need of me in this affair." In fact, I stood very well with the prelate ; who, whenever he met me, always stopped to speak to me ; because I frequently made him some answer that pleased him. The good man, in truth, was not one of those nice noblemen, who can only be diverted with superior sense and poignant wit ; any indifferent piece of humour served as well to make him laugh as

an epigram of Martial would have done. So I took the liberty of going by myself into the apartment of his lordship, and asked him for the vacant benefice.

“How now, Estevanille!” said the Bishop, laughing, “are you going to become a member of the Church? Are you equal to undertake the laborious task of a Canon?” “Why not, my lord?” said I: “I say my Breviary like any one else; and I am very equal to the task of eating my four meals a day.” “And you are, apparently,” said he, “both chaste and sober?” “So so, my lord,” I replied; “and learned in proportion. Your lordship must therefore perceive that I am worthy of a place in your Chapter.” “Why, truly,” said the Bishop, laughing heartily, “I can no longer refuse you, without injustice. But,” (assuming a serious tone,) “for whom,” said he, “would you obtain the Canonry in question? Is it for a man really worthy of it? You must consider, that, in asking for a benefice for any one, you in some sort make yourself responsible for his character.” “Oh, my

lord," said I, "the ecclesiastic for whom I interest myself has no need of a voucher."
"Who, then, is this superior character?" said the Bishop: "I am anxious to know him; for we have few of such a description." I had no sooner named the chanter Vanegas, than the Prelate resumed his air of satisfaction. "Ah! very well," said he: "he is an excellent man: you could not have proposed one to me that I should like better: Vanegas is an honest man. His morals are good; and I wish all my Canons were as learned as he."

I returned a thousand thanks to the Bishop for having granted my request, and went directly to carry the news to my friend; who, seeing me enter in great emotion, said to me, with alarm, "What is the matter? What does your agitation mean?" "It is to tell you," I replied, "that you are successor to the Licentiate, Baptist Leon: my lord has given me this Canonry for you. I seized, with joy, this occasion to testify to you that I have not forgotten the good offices you have done me." Vanegas, less

delighted to be provided with a benefice, which put him at his ease in the world, than to see me so grateful, wept for joy; and, folding me in his arms, made me sensible, that there is no pleasure equal to obliging a deserving friend.

As I was leaving the house of this new Canon, I met Don Ramirez de Prado, the great scholar, with whom I lived as a boarder at Dr. Canizarez', and who had outwitted me in my money concerns. We recognised each other, and embraced. "What joy," said he, "do I experience in seeing again, after six years, Señor Estevanille Gonzalez, my old comrade, and my friend! From what country do you come? and what have you been doing, since the day you disappeared, like lightning, from the quarter of the University?" "I have passed," said I, "some years in Italy:" "and I," he replied, "have been at Madrid; where I should be at present, if the death of my father, and the care of collecting together his property, had not recalled me to this country, where, you know, I was born; my father having

been a nobleman of Corita, a large village in the neighbourhood of Salamanca."

I now asked the Cavalier if he could give me any news of the Señora Dalfa and Bernardina. "It is a long time," said he, "since I saw them; but I am not ignorant of the present state of their affairs. The aunt is at Toledo, assisting a Knight of Castile to spend the proceeds of his appointment; and the niece is at Madrid, kept by the Count of Medellin, at great expense." "These good ladies," said I, "were not honoured with lovers of so much consequence in the days that I lavished my pistoles upon them. Women of pleasure commonly finish where they should have begun; but it seems that their present admirers like bran better than meal."

After this conversation, Don Ramirez informed me that he should return immediately to Madrid; but promised that he would not set off without seeing me again. His promise, however, was vain. Whether he forgot it, or whether he cared not enough

for me to induce him to keep it, I know not; but I saw him no more.

We led at the palace the happiest life in the world: there were no quarrels nor animosities amongst the domestics; which was very extraordinary, for in great houses discord commonly reigns. Our days passed for some time most agreeably: but a sorrowful event, at length, put an end to our happiness. The Bishop fell sick. We flattered ourselves, at first, notwithstanding his great age, that his disorder would not terminate fatally: and the physicians always flattered us with hopes of his recovery. But never trust to the prognostics of these Doctors! they hurried the prelate with so much precipitation, that they did not allow him time to make a will; which threw all the household into despair, particularly those who thought they had a right to have their services rewarded. Their tears were dried up by Don Christoval; who, finding himself sole heir to his uncle, had the generosity to promise them annuities. Unhappily for

them, however, he had no time to keep his promise ; for a few days after the funeral of his uncle, as he was hunting, he had the misfortune to fall from his horse, and was so much hurt as to survive only a few hours. The widow of this young nobleman, it is true, made them some acknowledgments for their services ; but it was by presents, which she distributed with many expressions of gratitude, although they were moderate.

For myself, I was so much affected with the death of my dear young master, that, in the first transport of my grief, I thought of throwing myself into the great convent of the order of St. Francis, and taking the cowl. Happily, Vanegas, with whom I consulted on this excellent plan, persuaded me from it, by representing to me that the cloister was not my element. " I know you well," said he : " you are naturally lively and unsettled. As soon as you become a novice, you will be disgusted with the monastic life, in spite of all that the monks can do to make it pleasant. I would advise

you to go to Murcia, to see in what state your relations are and especially your uncle, Master Dammén Carnicero, who was your guardian. According to what you have told me, he must have amassed great wealth since you left him ; and you may, by returning to him, become his heir. And, let the worst come to the worst, if he should be dead before you get there, you can call to account those of his relations who have taken possession of his wealth."

I approved the advice of the Canon, and determined to follow it. Taking my leave of him, I departed from Salamanca, and went to Madrid with the muleteers : from Madrid I went to Cuenca, by the same conveyance ; and, in the course of eight or ten days, I arrived at the city of Murcia, which I did not behold without satisfaction.

I would not go at once to my uncle, without knowing, before I saw him, what sort of state he was in : and to effect this,

I stopped at the first inn ; where, without making myself known, I had a long conversation with the host, who was, I knew, a man perfectly well acquainted with what I wanted to learn. " Tell me," said I, " if Master Damien Carnicero is still alive, and if he is still first surgeon to the hospital of this city ?" " He is still alive," said the host, " if one may call a man alive, who is old, paralytic, and more dead than alive. He practises no longer, and is reduced to spending his last days in bed, or in an easy chair." " Is he rich ?" said I. " As a Jew," replied he ; " and, in truth, it is impossible he should be otherwise, after being a surgeon so long, which is a very lucrative trade ; and especially when a surgeon understands, as Carnicero did, better than any one else, how to be a mountebank and a miser. But," continued he, " I pity this poor devil ! After all the pains he has taken to accumulate wealth, he has no children, and no heirs, but a nephew and niece, who have been out of Murcia twelve or fifteen years, and of whom he hears

nothing. The Hospital will profit well by their absence."

I judged, by this conversation, that I had not done amiss in returning to Murcia: and being anxious to get the start of the Hospital, I went the next morning to my uncle, whom I found bed-ridden. He had with him a venerable Monk of the order of St. Dominic, with a Doctor of Physic; one of whom was come there to add to the number of his visits, and the other to make himself useful to his Convent. Master Damien no sooner cast his eyes upon me, than he recollected me. "By St. Colome, and by St. Damien!" cried he, "here is my nephew, Estevanille, whom I thought I had lost!" At this exclamation, I approached him, and embraced him with a degree of transport, made up of affection and interest—part joke, part earnest. I would afterwards have appeared to be extremely affected at the melancholy state in which I found him; but he cut me short, by saying, with the tone of a Stoic, "Do not speak of that, nephew:

must we not all come to this soon or late ? It is seventy-two years since the Destinies undertook to weave the thread of my days. Is it not full time that their scissars should cut the thread ?” After saying these words, he expressed a wish to speak to me in private. Upon which the Monk and the Physician retired ; the former appearing to me a little mortified at the unexpected arrival of the heir.

My uncle, finding himself alone with me, said, “ Well, Estevanille ! you see yourself again in the house where you were brought up. Tell me, my friend, where you come from ? Give me an account of all you have done since you left me. I have not forgot how you hated surgery ; and I make no doubt that you have embraced another profession. What gives me pleasure is, that you do not return like the Prodigal Son ; and if one may trust to appearances, you have made a good friend of Fortune.” “ Yes, thank Heaven !” said I, “ she has always favoured me. I am very well contented

with my situation : it was solely the wish to see you that brought me here. The ties of blood and gratitude have made me abandon the court of the Duke of Ossuna, Viceroy of Naples, to come and live at Murcia, with an uncle to whom I owe so many obligations.” “ Ah ! what situation,” said Master Damien, “ had you with the Duke of Ossuna ? ” “ I was, at first, page to this Nobleman,” said I, and then I was promoted to be one of his equerries. I have obtained his leave to return to Spain to see you, and his Excellency, pleased with the affection I expressed for you, very willingly granted permission.”

I leave you to judge, from this lie, of those that I afterwards let fly at the good man, in the course of my history. I strung them thick one upon the other ; and only spoke truth when it would answer my purpose ; which, you may suppose, was not very often. In a word, wishing to pass for a man of probity and property, in the eyes of my uncle, as the secret means of making

myself his heir, I made no scruple about lying, to produce the desired effect. "Well returned, Gonzalez," said my uncle, when I had finished my romance: "I perceive, by the ingenuousness and innocence with which you have recounted your adventures in Italy, that your morals are not contaminated. I am much delighted to see you return in the style I had fondly wished you to do: for if you had not, knowing nothing of what was become of you, I should have left, by my will, all my wealth to the Fathers of St. Dominic, and to the Hospital. Yes, my child, I was on the point of doing, out of piety, as I thought, this piece of injustice to you. But, God be thanked! you are, no doubt, sent hither, to prevent my committing so great an error, as to rob my own family, and let strangers be benefitted by the wealth that belongs of right to you.

At this conversation, which shewed me what a narrow escape I had, I seized one of my uncle's hands, and kissed it with

an air of tenderness and gratitude, thanking him for his kind intentions.—Whatever cause of quarrel a testator may have against his heir, if the heir knows how to play his cards well, the testator is sure to be his dupe.—My affection and gratitude were not even suspected by the good man: he even appeared affected by it. “Gonzalez,” he added, “I have now the intention of leaving you all my wealth that I have gained in Murcia; and you solely shall have it. I shall not leave a maravedi to your sister Inesilla. Scarcely was she fourteen years old, when she allowed herself to be carried off by an officer of infantry, who went with her to Catalonia. I have never heard one word of her, from that time to this; and I do not doubt but she is now living in a state of disgraceful libertinism: consequently, she shall have no part of my inheritance. She does not deserve even to be remembered by me.

Thus spoke Master Damien: and I must confess, that, like a good brother, proud of his honour, so far from taking the part of

my sister, and endeavouring to reconcile my uncle to her, by hoping that her conduct was not so criminal as he imagined, I affected to be indignant at her conduct, and vowed I would never more speak to her. This succeeded so well with the old man, that, having made his will a few days after, he never again named the poor girl, and left me his sole heir, and residuary legatee. Nothing now remained for my dear uncle to do, to put the finishing stroke to his kind intentions towards me, but to die ; and that he was not long about. He soon took his departure for the other world ; and I took immediate possession of all his effects in this ; which might fairly be estimated at twenty thousand ducats. This wealth he had fairly acquired, by burning, broiling, and roasting the sick : for the reader cannot fail to recollect the specifics of this famous surgeon, and the anodyne methods he took to cure head-aches and dropsies.

As soon as I found myself in possession of so much property, I experienced the usual effects of riches. I became as haughty as

the Great Mogul, and like the Gripus of Plautus, who, because he had found a treasure, renounced Philosophy, and henceforward thought only of diverting himself. "Gonzalez," said I to myself, "you are, at last, in a state of opulence, and become what may be termed one of the happy people of the age. You may now hold up your head like a lord. Think no more of servitude. It is degrading to a young man of your disposition, and would be a reflection on those good fathers and uncles who deprive themselves of the necessities of life, and toil away their life's blood, to lay-by property for their heirs and successors. Think only of making a figure in the world; and despise the mean badges of slavery."

I need not take much pains to inform you, friendly reader, that such was my determination. I sold all my real estate, converted it into beautiful pistoles and doubloons, and soon quitted my residence at Murcia. If you are anxious to know

with what kind of equipage I left it, learn, that my suite was composed of a servant, mounted on a good mule as well as myself, and a third loaded with a large trunk, in which was contained my inheritance. I took the road to Madrid ; as that city appeared to be most suitable to an heir of my fortune ; or, I should rather say, to a young man well disposed to ruin himself.

On my arrival in the capital of our dominions, I went to lodge near the Gate of the Sun, in an hotel, where the first person I met was Don Ramirez de Prado. We embraced with much affection ; and testified, on both sides, more joy at the sight of each other than we had done before. " What brings you to Madrid ?" said Don Ramirez to me. " Are you come to remain here ?" " It is my intention so to do," said I : " all the other cities of the world, even the capitals of other nations, appear to me mere provincial towns in comparison of Madrid. It is the place in which all men of fortune should live and die." My answer made

Prado laugh. "You must dearly love Madrid," returned he, "to speak of it in such terms. I acknowledge that it is a very charming city; but I find, to be able to enjoy its pleasures, that one must be in opulence: for pleasure costs money. Are you in a state to purchase its enjoyments by dint of gold?" "No, on my word," I replied. "Nor I much longer," said he: "very little time has elapsed since I went to Salamanca, to take possession of my inheritance: and my father had left me enough to live at Madrid as a man of good family; but, between ourselves, I have already spent the greater part; and was in a train to make away with the rest, when, by the greatest good fortune in the world, I, all at once, became wise." I set up, in my turn, a hearty laugh at these words; and entreated Don Ramirez to let me know how it was possible for a young libertine to reform so suddenly, whilst old ones can only be reformed by death." "If you wish to know," said he, "in what manner this reformation has been effected in me, give yourself the trouble to walk into my apartment, for I lodge in this hotel:

I will relate to you the history of my reformation." My curiosity being excited by this discourse, I followed him into his closet; and there, after we were seated, he began as follows:

DON RAMIREZ DE PRADO'S TALE.

I HAD scarcely become the scholar and boarder of Doctor Canizarez, when I began to give myself up to that passion which I naturally have for the female sex. Señora Dalfa, who was distinguished in the city by the name of The Handsome Widow, was the first that attracted my attention ; not so much by her beauty, as by a peculiar fascination in her manner, which was calculated to attract young men, and which she kept in full play during the life of the Doctor of Law, her husband. She succeeded in drawing me into her toils ; and, although I say it myself, coquette as she was, I succeeded in making her fond of me. I went to her whenever I pleased ; and was always well received. That privilege, however, I only enjoyed in common with many other scholars ; for certainly her house was not, like the

temple of Ceres, forbidden to men. It must be confessed, notwithstanding, that the Señora made some distinction among her gallants, and, with the exception of myself, preferred those who had their purses well lined. Her society was, for the greater part, composed of young men of good families, who robbed their fathers to enable them to give entertainments to this handsome widow and her young niece, Bernadina, whose growing attractions began to be noticed. Some noblemen, who came under the description of the lesser nobility, enraptured with her beauty, attempted her virtue; and the most generous were successful. For my own part, though almost always without money, I never failed to be well received by these ladies. It is true, to supply my own want of money, I took men of fortune there, who had to pay all the expenses, as a kind of initiation fee.

[I interrupted Don Ramirez in this place with a laugh. "You know," said I, "that I am not ignorant of this matter: you took

good care that my doubloons should fly in regaling the two nymphs ; and, permit me to say, that it was a transaction disgraceful to a gentleman." " And yet," replied Prado, " it might be pardonable in a young man, whose love overpowered all other considerations. Besides, between ourselves, where is the man that can review all the actions of his past life, without feeling a secret consciousness of having committed some evils ? ' There is no man,' says one of our Spanish authors, ' who examines his life with scrupulous attention, but will find he has committed some shameful action, deserving of serious punishment.' Then, why should one worm be severe in his censures of another ? We should take care to have very clean hands, before we enter upon the accusation of another."

These observations of Don Ramirez made me blush ; and I said to myself, " Does he not speak truth ? What mortal can say that he has lived all his life with spotless integrity and purity ? Can you, Señor Estevanille ?

If you fancy that you can, you must, undoubtedly, have forgotten the manner in which you acquitted yourself at Salamanca, of the pious commissions entrusted to you by the Licentiate Salablanca. Do you remember the dropsical patient in the Hospital at Murcia? and have you forgotten how you acquired those fine pistoles that Don Ramirez spent for you? *You* are well entitled to call *him* to account indeed! Are you not a thousand times more faulty than he? Reform yourself, before you dare to accuse others. If every one were as eager to reform his own life, as to find out and publish the faults of others, we should find society far more improved than by all the labours of the clergy. ‘Physician, heal thyself!’ should be said to all defamers.” These reflections, however, only passed between me and my conscience, without interrupting Prado, who continued as follows.]

Dr. Canizarez, perceiving I was quite unsettled, and not ignorant of the cause, gave me a sensible and pathetic reprimand, to

induce me to break off all connection with the Señora Dalfa and her niece. What was the consequence of it? I kept away for three days; and on the fourth I flew there again, and continued my visits in spite of the Doctor, who, angry at the little effect which his remonstrance had upon me, threatened to inform my father of my conduct. He went still farther; he put his threat in execution: and, a short time after, I received a letter from Corita, in which Don Balthazar de Prado, my father, ordered me to return immediately home. That was all he required. There was not a word in his letter of any displeasure; and I obeyed him without hesitation.

As soon as I saw him, he said to me with mildness, “ My son, I have not recalled you to reprimand you for the little attention you paid to Dr. Canizarez: you are no longer a child; and you have learning enough for the situation in which I intend to place you; which is, in the Minister of State’s Office, at Madrid. Don Rodriguez

de Calderone is first secretary to the Minister ; or, to speak with more propriety, the colleague of the Duke of Lerma is my friend. I have already informed him of my intention to send you to Madrid, under his auspices ; and I have received for answer, that he will receive you as the son of his best friend. It only remains for me to say to you, Don Ramirez, that I do not intend to force you into a line of life that you are averse to. If you have any repugnance to the situation of clerk, and should prefer a commission in the Guards, Don Rodriguez, who has a company, can procure you one. But, consider well, before you determine on either of these situations."

Two months after my father had spoken to me in this kind affectionate manner, I set out for Madrid, where my first business was, to find out, and introduce myself to, Don Rodriguez de Calderone ; who had no sooner read the letter that I presented to him from Don Balthazar, than he gave me a very kind reception ; although his usual

manner was cold and haughty. "My child," said he to me, "what are you intended for? what do you wish to be?" I answered, that I had not yet come to a determination on that head. "Very well," said he; "come to me again when you have determined on any thing; and rest satisfied, that you will find me disposed to lend you my hand. You may assure your father, Señor Don Balthazar, my old friend, of my best intentions, when you write to him."

Delighted to have been so well received by a man who, I knew, could do any thing, I began to make my observations on the clerks of the Minister's office, and the officers of the Guards, to find out which side my heart inclined to. The different airs of these gentlemen equally flattered my vanity. From the important swaggering of the clerks, I felt myself tempted to become one of them; and when I saw the officers take upon themselves the consequence of Generals, I determined for the army. I remained a long time irresolute; but, at last, the military prevailed. As soon as I had made up

my mind, I informed Don Rodriguez of it ; who promised me an ensigncy, which he gave me two months after.

I no longer looked upon myself as under controul ; although I did not grow more moderate, or acquire more self-command. I sought the acquaintance of officers, who, for the greater part, lived in a kind of style that I was well disposed to follow with them : but I became most intimate with a lieutenant of the name of Steinbach ; and the similarity of our inclinations united us, by degrees, so strongly, that we became inseparable. Steinbach was about eight-and-twenty, with a good person, much vivacity, valour, and probity. As I was only twenty, such a friend might have been to me a kind of Mentor, if he had not been equally as much in need of a guardian as myself : but his passions were as strong as my own ; and whenever I took him as a guide, it was only the blind leading the blind. We both loved pleasure, and our fathers sent us money enough to gratify it : Steinbach, particularly, very often received from Germany,

his native country, such letters of credit as enabled him to entertain the ladies in a handsome style.

“ Don Ramirez,” said he to me one day, “ I have discovered a treasure. I will introduce you to a house, where you will see two young and handsome Genoese girls, who are sisters, living under the care of an aunt, who is come to settle at Madrid.” Scarcely had he finished speaking, when I pressed for the introduction. He could not help laughing at my impatience ; and, willing to gratify it, he set off with me at the instant. As soon as the aunt appeared, I imagined something in her features resembling the Señora Dalfa. Her manners were pleasing, and I paid attention to her with delight : but when Donna Theodora, and Donna Inez, the nieces, blazed upon us, in all their charms, (unhappy moment for the aunt !) she lost all power of attraction for me : I had no longer eyes but for the young beauties ; who completely dazzled me, and instantly made a deep impression upon me. Donna Theodora, the eldest, struck me with

an appearance of sense and modesty ; and I was enraptured with the vivacity of the youngest. We did not leave them till after a long visit ; and when we were in the street, Steinbach asked me which of the sisters I gave the preference to ? “ My friend,” said I, “ you ask me a question which embarrasses me : I find both these ladies so fascinating, that I really know not to which I should give the preference. However, if I must absolutely make a choice, it would be in favour of Theodora.” “ And I,” replied the German, “ am for Donna Inez : not that I think her more deserving of love than her sister ; but she possesses a certain charm that strongly attaches me to her. I have a foolish idea,” said he, “ come into my head,” (laughing immoderately). “ Suppose we undertake to make love to them for our diversion ? Pay *your* addresses to Donna Theodora, and I will pay *mine* to Donna Inez. Let us devote ourselves to their service, and feign to be ardent lovers, sparing no pains to convince them that we are so : they are worthy of being added to the number of our conquests.

I gave in to this foolish plan, hand over head ; and, the next afternoon, we began our operations by a profusion of flattering compliments to the aunt ; and afterwards, laying siege to our princesses, we played the game of love so successfully, that we completely made fools of the two ; which was not very surprising, as Steinbach was accustomed to the society of actresses, and I fresh from the school of Señora Dalfa. The better to succeed in this scene of deception, a collation of fruit and wine was sent by us, which they consented to accept, after great entreaties ; and having again renewed our game, and played our parts of lovers some time longer, we took our leave.

Returning home, my friend and I mutually inquired of each other, if we could flatter ourselves with having made any impression upon our mistresses' hearts. " For my part," said Steinbach, " I have to do with such a giggler, that she will laugh at a feather, and makes a jest of all I say : I cannot make her listen at all seriously." " And I have used," said I, " all my art

and *finesse* on Theodora, without being able to gain an inch of ground. During the whole of our conversation, she did not appear to pay the least attention to my professions, but persevered in a cold silence. It may be only pretence; but I augur no good from it: and to tell you the truth, I think we shall remain where we began. We have undertaken a siege that will last too long." "Let us not be so soon discouraged," replied the German. "It is a common manœuvre of women, who wish to make sure of their men, to appear insensible to their first addresses. By a little perseverance, I have no doubt that we shall soon make our little Genoese change their note."

In fact, it turned out as my friend predicted. Our goddesses, by degrees, became more kind; and Donna Inez soon lent an attentive ear to the flourishes of Steinbach; whilst the cold Theodora became sensible to the nonsense I plied her with. Although this apparent sensibility to the warmth of our attachment might be attributed to the expense we incurred in entertaining them,

and to the presents we made them, we were vain enough to take all the merit on our pretty persons. The worst part of the story for us, however, was, that in our endeavours to make these Genoese in love with us, we became seriously attached to them. Donna Inez acquired insensibly such dominion over Steinbach, that she drew him into a promise to marry her; and Donna Theodora, wishing to make as great a fool of me, teased me incessantly to the same effect. I held out stoutly during some days; but she shed so many tears, that my resolution was shaken. When her icy heart had melted into tears, how could my frosty one resist? I made her, in short, the same promise that my friend had made her sister; and, as two husbands *in petto*, we became complete masters of the house.

As, by this arrangement, all the expenses of the establishment had fallen upon us, we were determined to regulate its amusements. We desired the aunt to get rid of two men, an Alcayde of the Court, and an old Knight, who, under pretence of visiting

the aunt, we suspected of coming to wheedle the nieces. They were not, in truth, formidable rivals, as to their persons ; but we learnt they had the character of being well lined with pistoles, of which they were very prodigal when they had fallen in love. The good aunt, who was well aware of what she owed us, made no hesitation to do so ; and we acquired, in our eyes, great consequence from this circumstance. You will soon see if we had not great reason to be grateful for such a mark of attention to our wishes.

During these transactions, I received a letter from Corita, which informed me, that my father was so dangerously ill, that the physicians despaired of his life. I went immediately to shew my letter to Señor Calderone, who appeared affected with the intelligence, and said to me, “ Although the King’s service does not permit you to quit your post, you shall go to your father : I will take the responsibility upon myself : set off directly ; there is no time to be lost. I wish it may please Heaven that the pleasure Don Balthazar will have on seeing

you may save his life." When I left Don Rodríguez, I went to take leave of Donna Theodora; who was so violently affected when she heard of my leaving Madrid, that she fainted away. The aunt, the sister, Steinbach, and myself, used all our endeavours to comfort her; but she was inconsolable. She cried and screamed, and was so violently affected, that it did not appear natural to me. However, I found myself somewhat affected by all this grief, whether real or feigned. But I tore myself away, and, quickly mounting my horse, rode with all speed to Corita. I found Don Balthazar past recovery; and, in fact, half dead. He was speechless and senseless; and as if he had only waited for my arrival, he expired immediately in my arms. I wept bitterly for his loss; and I must have been a very unnatural son, if I had not deeply felt the loss of a father, so worthy of my affection.

Having paid the last duties to my parent, and taken possession of his estate, which was free and unencumbered with debts, I found myself, all at once, worth fifty

thousand crowns, in good sound property. The use I made of it you will soon hear. After purchasing a farm, worth about a thousand crowns per annum, I turned the rest into ready money, and set off, without loss of time, to my dear Theodora, whose absence began to be insupportable to me. I felt so much impatience to be again with her, that I left Salamanca without recollecting that I had promised to take leave of you before my departure. You will have the goodness to excuse this forgetfulness.

On my arrival at Madrid, and previous to my seeing the Genoese, I ran to my friend Steinbach, to know how Donna Theodora had conducted herself during my absence. "With much prudence," he replied; "I have not seen a soul enter the house; and what must give you great pleasure, she seems to have enjoyed nothing since you went. At least, I can assure you, that whenever I see her, she seems plunged in the deepest melancholy; and it is a testimony due to her fidelity." "You delight me," said I, "with such gratifying intelligence: it is pleasing

to a lover, who feels strongly attached to his mistress, to be convinced she is worthy of his love."—"Well," said my friend; "as you are so well satisfied with Donna Theodora, I conclude that you will marry her?" "Without doubt," replied I; "have not you also the intention of marrying Inez?" "Undoubtedly," said he: "I have so promised her; and my word is sacred with me."

When I presented myself before my Genoese, so far from belying the report Steinbach had made of her conduct, she confirmed the proofs of her strong attachment. She overwhelmed me with tenderness: and, as she was drowned in grief at my departure, she was now enraptured with joy. To shew how delighted I was, to see myself so much beloved by her, I made the first cut on my inheritance, in making presents, not only to Theodora, but to her sister, and even to her aunt. By these well-placed liberalities, and feasts, and concerts, and a thousand other foolish expenses, I dissipated, in a short time, more

than half my fortune. I set no bounds to my prodigality; and I should indisputably have been completely ruined, if, by a providential discovery, Steinbach and myself had not found out what was passing with our *dulcineas* in the back ground. The good aunt, who prided herself so much on the sacrifice she had made for us of the Alcayde of the Court, and the old Knight, had so well laid her plans with these old fools, that no sooner did we leave the house, at any time, than they were constantly introduced, to supply our places.

We heard this first as a report; but we found it too true. After consulting together what vengeance we should take on these women, nothing could appease the hurricane of our fury, at first, but determining to burn the house, and running our swords through the hearts of our rivals, as they were endeavouring to escape. Our anger cooling, however, we became less blood-thirsty; and thought it best to let the affair pass over without any noise, which would only bring ridicule upon ourselves.

We therefore wisely resolved not to boast of the adventure; and to punish, by contempt, and loss of plunder, the perfidy of these wantons.

Don Ramirez de Prado finished his story here; and observed, by way of comment, "It is very difficult to know women perfectly. Who could ever have believed these Genoese capable of playing such a game with us? Yet, I am fortunate to have saved my estate of a thousand crowns; for if their villainy had not been discovered, they would not have left me a single pistole. This adventure has brought me to reflection; and is the cause of my renouncing gallantry for ever. Since that time I have led a regular life, and my purse remains in good condition"—"And your friend Steinbach," said I, "is he also become wise?"—"I can say nothing to that," said Prado: "three weeks ago he went to Germany, and since that time I have heard nothing of him. But he has a hundred

times sworn to me, that he will guard against love all his life, which only leads to a gulf of misfortunes. I will advise you to follow our example, if you have any property. Avoid love, and you may be able to take care of your money."

"I will now," said I, "give you some advice, in return for yours. I saw, from the first, how your Genoese would turn out. When women receive presents from men, they are neither honest in person nor pocket: nothing but ruin can come of such companions. Seek out some amiable woman for your companion; she will amend your heart, and refine your manners; and will not suffer you to throw away your money on her."—Don Ramirez and I should have continued our conversation, if the host had not interrupted us, to say, that the cavaliers who commonly supped there were assembled, and supper would be served in an instant. Prado asked, if Don Gaspard de Messagna was there? "He will be here presently," said the host. "So much the better," said

my friend; "we shall sup with an original, who will amuse us."—"Gonzalez," said he, addressing himself to me, "prepare to see a coxcomb, puffed up with pride: he is a petty hidalgo from the neighbourhood of Alcala, whose whole wealth consists in a cottage and about three acres of land. Puffed up with the possession of so vast a domain, he fancies himself as rich as a grandee: and if by chance you see him walking about the ruin, which he magnificently calls his castle, and he meets with any hunters, he proudly tells them to take care how they hunt on his grounds. This coxcomb only talks of his nobility: he says he is descended from King Pelagus; and boasts of being related to, or connected with, all the great nobility of the kingdom.

This account made me wish to see Don Gaspard de Messagna; and proceeding with Don Ramirez to the supper-room, we found ten or twelve cavaliers assembled. We saluted each other, and seated ourselves at table, where supper was soon served. I sat next to Prado, and soon

attracted the attention of the company, which seemed to me a motley groupe of merchandize. A little ill-looking man first attracted my attention, by something grotesque and ridiculous in his person, which made me suspect it was Don Gaspard; and as soon as he opened his mouth to speak, my doubts were turned to certainty. "Gentlemen!" said he, apostrophizing the whole company, "I think that you will not be sorry to hear the news I collected this morning at the king's levee. A grandée of the first class, a relation and friend of mine, came up to me with a mysterious air, and said, 'Cousin! I am very happy to see you here, that I may inform you of something that has not yet been mentioned to any one.' At these words he drew me aside, and whispered in my ear:—'Ossuna is recalled from his government of Naples. He is ordered to return immediately to Court, to clear himself of some crimes of which he is accused. They say he has embezzled the royal revenues; and I know not what delinquencies besides, the least of which is sufficient to ruin him: and, I

‘have no doubt, he never will draw himself out of this affair with honour.’ This is, word for word, what my relation told me : and I must confess to you, that I think as he does, that Ossuna will never get out of this scrape, but with the loss of his employment. He has committed certain actions, which they have the best right in the world to call him to account for ; and if he clear himself of these, there are many others to bring forward, which may even affect his life.”

I know not how it was that I could not hear the Duke of Ossuna spoken of in this way, without feeling excessively angry : for the Viceroy ought at least to have been indifferent to me, after what passed between us at Palermo : I should have been excuseable even if I had hated him ; but, on the contrary, taking fire at the hidalgo’s observations, I hastily interrupted him : “ Sir, sir !” said I, “ take care what you say. Recollect, that the Duke of Ossuna is one of the greatest men of the age. Ask the Sicilians, whom he has governed, before

the Neapolitans, what opinion they have of him? They will, to a man, tell you that he is a hero, whose loss they must ever regret!"

Don Gaspard, at these words, looking at me with a haughty and contemptuous air, answered, "I did not expect to find here a defender of Ossuna. You are apparently paid to defend this hero!"---"And you," I replied, "have no need of payment to speak ill of any one: your own malignant heart feels sufficient gratification in detracting from the merit of all."---"Whoever you are," said the hidalgo, "you are very bold, in daring to contradict me."---"And you are just as much so," said I, "to dare to speak in such disrespectful terms of a nobleman, whom a petty noble in his cottage ought to respect."---"You are insolent," said Don Gaspard, with a swaggering air; "and if the respect I have for the company did not restrain me, I would teach you to pay more respect to a man of my quality."---"You!" cried I, in my turn, rising with fury; "I defy you to do

your worst. Come out directly, if you dare." Messagno accepted my defiance, and would have followed me; but the company interfering in our quarrel, obliged us again to take our places.

My readers will, perhaps, be astonished to find me shewing so much courage at Madrid, after having had so little at Florence, in the affair of Roger Matadori: and I must confess, that, besides knowing I had a supporter at table in the person of an officer of the German Guards, I was convinced that Don Gaspard was not braver than myself. I could see in his countenance that he was afraid.

When we were both seated at table, my enemy and I affected to look furiously at each other, like two combatants ill-separated, who only watch their opportunity to renew their quarrel. At last all the company rose to go home; and Don Gaspard left the room, threatening me with his finger. I replied in the same manner: and some of the guests were so much afraid of

the consequences, that they went home with Messagna, to watch him. Don Ramirez having the same fears of me, would not quit me till I was in my apartment. An equivocal action often gives a man reputation ; and this quarrel made me pass for a man of spirit with Prado, and all those who were present. But was it surprising that they were deceived? I even began to think myself courageous; and I did not find out my mistake till some hours after I was in bed; when, not being able to sleep, I began to turn the adventure over in my mind. "Must not I have been mad," said I, "to have so warmly taken the part of a nobleman whom I have no cause to praise? I may have reason to repent my indiscretion. Messagna, who appears cowardly, may not be so. Who knows, but, at this moment, he may intend to call me out? Perhaps he has already determined on it. Ah! if I really thought so, I would rise directly, and get far away from Madrid. At present I have not parted with all my equipage; I have still a good mule."

I passed the night in much uneasiness : but Prado relieved me from it the next morning, and completely restored my tranquillity, by telling me news which occasioned more joy than I dared exhibit. "Don Gaspard," said he, "has returned to his cottage at day-break, without troubling his head about what would be said of his departure. What a poltroon it is ! You frightened us yesterday, by that sample of courage you gave him. He required no sleep, thank God ! but quickly returned to his own territories." In saying these words, my friend burst into loud fits of laughter, which would no doubt have been redoubled at my expense, if he had known that my enemy, by his flight, had only prevented mine. My vanity, however, took care to keep this part of the business a secret ; and I even affected to laugh with him ; but, in truth, it was only forced mirth, for I could not make a joke of Messagna, without feeling great contempt for myself.

Don Ramirez, being upon guard that day, left me, to go to his duty : and I went out

a short time after, with the intention of feasting my eyes with the great concourse of nobility, who resort every morning to the king's levee. I was very properly clothed; and I might boast of having a sufficiently respectable appearance, to avoid the scoffs that a pretended beau commonly attracts.

. As I was going to enter the palace, I met a cavalier coming out, whom I recognised to be Don Henry de Bolagnos, my former master. There are some proud footmen out of place, who are ashamed, and never see but with uneasiness, those they have waited upon. For my part, far from resembling such, I went up to Don Henry, and spoke to him with an easy but respectful air. He instantly recollected me, changed as I was in person, and said to me, smiling, "What, are you here, Estevanille! Well, how long have you been at Madrid?" "Ever since yesterday," said I; "and you perhaps imagine I am still in the service of the Duke of Ossuna---do you not?"--- "No," said he: "at the time you left Sicily, my friend, Quivillo, wrote me word

how and why you had the misfortune to fall into disgrace with the Viceroy. But, unless appearances are deceitful, you are now in a comfortable situation.”—“Appearances,” I replied, “are not deceitful. My fortune has never been in so good condition before; thanks to a dead uncle, a surgeon, who has left me, by his will, the power of being my own master for the rest of my days!” At these words the Señor de Bolagnos, changing his tone, said to me, with a serious air, “Señor Gonzalez, what you tell me overwhelms me with joy: I congratulate you on so happy a change; and what gives me as much satisfaction as the fortune of your uncle, is, that you seem to preserve those invaluable good spirits which Nature has endowed you with. But, my dear Estevanille,” said he, in an affectionate tone, “we are not in a proper place to satisfy the curiosity I have to learn your history. Come to my house; and we will dine together, if you have no pre-engagement.” I had too much value for the Señor Bolagnos, and felt too sensible of the honour he did me, to refuse him. He

made me get into his carriage, which was waiting for him, and took me to his house. When we were arrived, he said, "Now, Gonzalez, lay aside form : you are no longer my servant. I have no longer any authority over you. Let us live on friendly terms, and forget the past entirely." "Wherefore forget, sir?" replied I. "If it be kindness in you to forget I have served you, I should be ungrateful to lose sight of it. I never served a better master. Why should we not live so together again: you always treated me with affection." "Enough, my child," he said; "I will henceforth assume no other authority over you, but that of a friend."

Such was our conversation before dinner. When seated at table, he asked me a hundred questions about Sicily; and obliged me, from the beginning to the end of the chapter, to give him a circumstantial detail of my voyage to Italy, and what I did there contrary to my usual custom. I spoke nothing but truth; and when, in my narration, I came to speak of Don Joseph

Quivillo, I expatiated with gratitude on the kindness of that gentleman. "I shall remember with pleasure, all my life," said I, "the grief he shewed when I went to take leave of him: he was really much hurt at my going; whereas the perfidious Thomas, first valet-de-chambre of the Viceroy, I could perceive, felt a secret joy, although he affected to overwhelm me with caresses and marks of affection. Upon which, I can assure you, I have scratched out and blotted this traitor from the register of my friends."

At the word *register*, Don Henry burst out into a fit of laughing. "What then, Gonzalez," said he, "you have not yet forgot my Register?"—"It is always present to my thoughts," said I; "and it has often prevented my being the dupe of false friends."—"On this head," said Bolagnos, "I have another preservative: when I shewed you my Register, you advised me, if you remember, to write one of my Mistresses, which I have also done."—"I am delighted at it, sir," said I; "this is

what may be called making books useful to the public, and labouring for the good of society : I hope you will shew it to your friends, and pardon the freedom I take."

Smiling at my familiarity, and rising from table with a sign for me to follow him, he conducted me to his library: "There," taking down a Register of the same kind, but not so large as that of his friends, he put it into my hands, saying, "There is the list of ladies I have courted, from the first to the last; and the number, you see, is great. You will suppose I began early in life to pay my court to the fair sex; and truly, before I had arrived at manhood, I had already made more than one sacrifice to love."

I opened the Register; and stopping at the first page, I saw, in large letters, the name of Donna Clara de Cespedez. "This lady," said I to Don Henry, "is apparently the handsel of your heart."—"Yes," said "he, that is my first love: I had just completed my thirteenth year when I became

acquainted with this lady, who was a little more than my own age. As our parents were neighbours and good friends, I went there daily without restraint, and we were left to amuse ourselves in our own way : we were looked upon as children, whom there was no occasion to have an eye upon : but we soon convinced them to the contrary. Nature, which had already made us feel love, soon taught us how to express it. But Donna Clara was no sooner able to speak the language of lovers, than the inconstant listened to another besides me ; which plainly shews there is in woman seeds of inconstancy and infidelity, which soon or late will spring up.”—“ It was Donna Clara, then, who first deceived,” said I : “ But here is another deceiver,” (turning over the leaf,) “ and her name is, I perceive, Estelle, surnamed Boquita.”

“ This Estelle,” said Don Henry, “ was my second flame. A majestic shape, with the deportment of a queen ; eyes more brilliant than stars ; with a little mouth like a rose-bud, (which gained her the name of

Boquita); placed me in the number of those who were sighing for her. I at length declared my passion, and had the happiness to please her. She confessed her love: we settled all matters; and I was making preparations to marry her, when a more wealthy suitor made her an offer, whom she took at his word, and abandoned me.

“The lady whom I loved immediately after Estelle repaid my affection in no better way. Her name was Donna Eugenia d’Alvarade. I adored her; and she enchanted me with her elegant figure and superior mind. As I was not a person to be scorned by her, I had the pleasure to make her sensible of my attachment, and we promised each other eternal faith; but, on the eve of the day fixed for our marriage, a grandee ran away with her; and I was thunderstruck, on hearing that Eugenia, dazzled with the quality of her ravisher, had consented to the elopement. Thus was I sacrificed to Estelle and Eugenia; one from avarice, and the other from ambition.

“I was so violently piqued with the treachery of these two ladies, that I forswore love entirely. I kept my oath during six months, without being once tempted to break it. I applauded myself for the tranquillity my heart enjoyed; or rather, I thought three successive attachments ending in disappointment had destroyed my sensibility. What a mistake! I no sooner saw Donna Helena Pacheco, than I felt myself devoured with a more ardent flame than I had ever felt before. I determined to please the beautiful Helen; and I contended for her with twenty rivals, whom she sacrificed to me. All matters were settled, and the preparations for our wedding begun, when my future spouse dreamt that she saw me at the feet of a handsome woman, who allowed me to take liberties with her: she started out of her sleep, and was so struck with this absurd dream, which she regarded as a secret warning from Heaven not to unite herself to me, that she declared her determination to break off the match. You will imagine, no doubt, that she tacked about again, when this vagary of her mind was passed. No

such thing! neither her friends nor myself could ever induce her to get over this ridiculous idea; and our marriage was finally broken off."

I could not help laughing at this trait of female caprice; and I hoped to be amused with more anecdotes of the different manner in which Don Henry's mistresses had proved false to him: but two cavaliers, friends of his, coming in, he was obliged to replace his Register; for he was not, like the generality of authors, willing to shew his works to all the world.

These cavaliers were both Knights of St. Jaques, and great newsmongers. They apparently felt some repugnance at telling the news they were bursting with, before a stranger; and were drawing Bolagnos aside, to whisper in his ear, when, finding myself one too many in company, I took leave of Don Henry, who did not suffer me to depart without an invitation to visit him whenever I felt disposed.

I had scarcely got into the street, when

I observed the citizens assembling in clusters, and speaking low, with great eagerness and mystery. This made us suppose some great event had happened, or was about to happen; and as I entered my hotel, I asked the landlord if he knew what this commotion meant. "Why there is a report," said he, coldly, "that the Duke of Lerma, the Prime-minister, has lost his place. Some are sorry, some rejoice. For my part, I hope it is only a false report. I have heard more good than harm of the Prime-minister: but when they say more harm than good, there is no reason to fear a change."

Whilst my landlord was going on at this rate, I reflected within myself, "This must certainly be the cause of the visit of the Knights of St. Jaques. They had come to communicate this news to Don Henry, and to have his opinion of it."—The arrival of Don Ramirez confirmed me in this idea: he had just come out of the city, with a gloomy and absent air. "You have met with something," said I, "to put you in an

ill humour." Instead of answering me, he led me into his apartment ; when making me sit down, he took a chair near me, and sighed deeply. " What is the matter with you ?" said I, " you alarm me ; there is said to be bad news abroad." " True enough," answered Prado : " I hear one piece, which has blasted all my hopes. I have been to Don Rodriguez de Calderone, and found all his servants in consternation. In order to know the cause of it, I spoke to an old valet-de-chambre, who is in the confidence of his master, and whose friendship I possess. ' My friend,' said I to him, ' may I ask the cause of the sorrow that seems to reign in the house ? You know the interest I take in all things here.' ' Ah ! Señor Don Ramirez,' he answered, in a tone of the deepest affliction, ' all is lost ! The Duke of Lerma is no longer at the helm of affairs.' ' Oh, Heaven !' I exclaimed at these words, ' what is it you say ? Is it possible that he has lost the favour of the King ?' ' It is but too true,' replied the valet-de-chambre ; ' and what will astonish all posterity is, that his disgrace is the work of his own son,

the Duke of Uzede, who has long been endeavouring to ruin him with the King, whose favourite he was. He has, at last, succeeded in this unnatural attempt; and the King has written a note to the Minister with his own hand, ordering him to retire into what part of Spain he pleases, to enjoy in repose the benefits he has received from his liberal hand. This is what occasions such consternation here; for you must know, that the fall of Señor Don Rodriguez de Calderone must necessarily follow that of the Duke of Lerma.'

"To console the valet-de-chambre," said Don Ramirez, "and to flatter him with some hope, I said, 'My friend, in spite of all you have told me, I still doubt the misfortune of the Prime-minister. The ascendancy he has over the King makes his disgrace uncertain. He has a mind full of resources. If he is menaced with a storm, he has such abilities, that he can turn it aside. Perhaps, even at this moment, he stands better than ever with the King.' 'No,' said the valet-de-chambre, 'he will

never weather this. It is not an open enemy that has done him this dishonour; for then he could have borne it: but it is his own familiar friend.'—"I could say nothing consolatory in such a case," said Prado; "so I left him."

When Don Ramirez ceased speaking, he became lost in thought. I could well guess what made him so absent; and entering into his sentiments: "Your interest," said I, "is too dear to me, to permit me to listen to you with indifference: but, notwithstanding what you have just said of the disgrace of the Prime-minister, are you sure that it is certain? It is time enough to afflict yourself, when the news is confirmed. Perhaps, as you said to the valet, the Duke of Lerma has already regained the King's favour." "I wish it were so," said the officer, "not so much because I should lose, in the Señor Calderone, a protector, who could make my fortune, as for the recollection of what he has done for me."

After this conversation, Prado, changing

the subject, said to me, "Gonzalez, will you have the goodness to do me a favour, which I will hold myself indebted to you for? Will you sup this evening with me, in my apartment? I shall be much better pleased, in the state I am in, not to sup with the company: for they will not fail to talk of the Duke of Lerma and his Secretary. I might hear things would give me more pain than pleasure." "I applaud your prudence," I replied; "it is much better to avoid the evil that might happen. Perhaps," added I, smiling, "some new Messagna would give you an opportunity of doing more for Don Rodriguez, than I have been able to do for the Duke of Ossuna."

The approaching disgrace, which, in the opinion of all the world, threatened the Duke of Lerma, was the universal topic of conversation in Madrid, for about fifteen days; at the end of which time it died away. They were even convinced that it was a report without foundation, when they found the Minister presiding, as before, at

the Council every day, and giving audience. But about two months after, the good King Philip, whose health had been declining for a long time, grew rapidly worse, and died : and it was then made known, that the Prince, on his succession, had chosen for his Prime-minister, Don Gaspard de Guzman, Count of Olivares, his favourite.

The people, who loved novelty, rejoiced at this change ; but all the partizans of the House of Sandoval were much mortified, as well as those, who, like Don Ramirez, were interested for Don Rodriguez de Calderone. For my own part, who neither gained nor lost any thing by these revolutions, I saw them all with indifference. It was of no consequence to me, whether the Duke of Lerma, or Count Olivares, governed the State. I was only sorry for my friend Prado, who, no longer able to reckon on Calderone, had lost the best string of his bow.

The new Prime-minister, seeming deter-

mined to establish himself on the ruins of his predecessor, began by turning out all who had given him offence, and putting those in their place whom he thought firmly attached to him. Calderone was one of the first to feel this, in its full effect. They stripped him of all his appointments, and permitted him to retire. You will say; that, with all the wealth he possessed, he had enough to console him for his disgrace. Accordingly, he retired to Valladolid, the place of his birth; imagining they would leave him in quiet possession of the immense riches that he had amassed, as it was said, dishonestly. But scarce was he arrived there, when the Court nominated Commissioners to inquire into the crimes of which he was accused; and his judges, after a long examination, sentenced him to lose his head upon a scaffold.

The Count Olivares was not satisfied with the death of the faithful agent of his predecessor; but he sought out all those who had appointments from him, to deprive

them of their situations : and this research was made with so much minuteness and care, that Don Ramirez soon lost his ensigncy, because Don Rodriguez had given it to him. Not one of the partizans of the last Minister was left in his place. Prado (I must do this justice to his heart) was extremely affected with the tragical end of his benefactor. Had he been his own son, he could not have felt it more forcibly. He even exceeded the bounds of gratitude : for he was so much disgusted at the great world, that he determined to abandon Madrid ; as if the infamy of the punishment had reflected upon him. “ My dear Estevanille,” said he to me one day, “ we are about, once more, to be separated. I shall return to Corita, and live on my own estate, as a respectable country gentleman, with the thousand crowns income, that remains of my inheritance.” I would have opposed his determination ; but his mind was made up. We embraced, and he bade me an eternal adieu.

The loss of Don Ramirez affected me

for five or six days. I had already entered his name into the register of my friends; and, having no reason to scratch it out, I felt his loss. But as melancholy is incompatible with my disposition, it went off by degrees, and I became more gay than ever. It is true, I soon made another acquaintance, that helped me to forget him. This was a cavalier, a pretended gentleman of Asturias, who called himself Don Marcos de Girafa. You shall hear in what manner this Asturian and myself became acquainted. There was, at the Court end of the city, a Coffee-house; this was the common resort of all idle men of good fortune. I went there every day; and one morning, as I was taking my chocolate, there came in a very good-looking man, who by accident sat down next me. He began talking immediately; and I was pleased with his conversation. He spoke with much ease, fluency, and elegance; and was very lively, and fond of raillery: he was an agreeable satirist, without carrying his joke too far. Our dispositions appeared to be so much alike, that we

became soon attached to each other; inso-much, that in eight days we made reciprocal confidants of each other. I related to him my adventures; and he gave me his, as follows:—

DON MARCOS DE GIRAFA'S TALE.

DON Vincent de Girafa, my father, after having employed two thirds of his life, and of his patrimony, in the service of the King, retired into the city of Oviedo, where he married my mother, by whom he had no other child than myself. Although he had not much wealth, he gave me a good education: he had many masters to instruct me; and, amongst others, an excellent performer on the guitar: as if he thought the talent of playing this instrument would one day be of great importance to me. I learnt to be a proficient in music; and, if you add to this a slight knowlege of the *belles lettres*, this was the full extent of my merit.

My father having one day made me enter into his closet with him, said, “ Marcos, you have now entered into your seventeenth year: it is time you should begin to have

some character ; for I do not suppose, my son, that you will live, like a sloth, in indolence and inaction. I have resolved to send you to seek your fortune at Court. You do not want courage ; you are not ill-made ; and you are a gentleman. Those who have these *three* strings to their bow, *must* get on in the world. Use your best endeavours to become page to some great nobleman : that will exactly suit you. I will equip you properly, and give you fifty pistoles, to enable you to live without being impatient to get into a situation unsuitable for you. Tell me, my friend," added he, " does my intention suit your taste ?" " Yes, my father," I replied, with a joy from which he drew a good omen ; " I will set out for Madrid whenever you please : my heart tells me I shall not be a long time before I find some nobleman who will be ready to accept of my services."

My answer pleased my father very much : he prepared good clothes for me, and every thing else he thought necessary for my journey ; and when the day of my departure was

come, my affectionate father tenderly embraced me. "Marcos," said he, "go, my child; may Heaven conduct you on your way, and bless your good intentions! But I have advice to give you, which you stand in need of; and that I recommend you, above all, not to neglect. Be always on your guard against your sprightly humour; for you are naturally gay: you know well that you have this fault. Sometimes you even laugh yourself, and make others laugh; without reflecting that you are a Spaniard, and a noble. Divest yourself of this bad habit; be always serious, always grave, whatever laughable things may be said or done before you. Finally, never lose that gravity which so honourably distinguishes us from all other nations." When my father had given me this important advice, he had the goodness to count me out fifty pistoles, and give them to me with his blessing. I then mounted my mule, and set forward over our fertile plains. Having never left home before, and possessing a taste for the beauties of Nature, I determined to travel slowly, and enjoy the romantic beauties of

the country I was to pass through. After an easy ride over the plain, I descended, from hill to hill, into contracted valleys, where the river is flanked with high rocks, at the end of which stands the village of Grado, on a plain, watered by a small stream. From thence I ascended to a plain of considerable extent, surrounded on all sides by high mountains. Here I began to breathe more freely, and looked round with delight, to contemplate a new world before me. The whole country, with its verdure, its inclosures, and its produce of fine corn on the little hills, which were otherwise covered with woods, seemed to rejoice on every side. From hence I was descending near an hour to a most romantic spot, called Belmonte, where there is a variety of foliage, with filberts, chesnuts, walnuts, and dates. It is situated in a ravine, with a rapid stream pouring with impetuosity through its rocky bed. The road ascends for three leagues to Aguerra. On these mountains are not only wolves, but bears, and a species of tiger; all of which in the winter are exceedingly ferocious; and, for fear of them, the shepherds at night con-

stantly drive their flocks into the villages. During the day, when browsing on the mountains, they are attended with strong dogs, armed with spiked collars. The ravine widens at this place, and admits of more extensive villages. Four leagues further on is St. Andres de Aguerra ; and not far from it, Pala de Somiedo, which occupies an eminence surrounded by fourscore acres of well-watered meadow, and shut in by rocks of a stupendous height. This village, with its meadows, the little river, and high mountains, either naked and almost perpendicular, or covered with hanging woods ; the goats leaping from rock to rock, and the cattle feeding peaceably below ; forms a most beautiful retreat. The ravine, through which the little river winds its course, alternately widens and contracts, being sometimes not more than two yards across, and in no part wider than six hundred feet ; sometimes sloping, and leaving a few acres for cultivation ; in other parts steep and inaccessible, except to goats ; often rugged and bare, but not unfrequently covered thick with a variety of trees, such as oak, ash, beech, filberts,

walnuts, chesnuts, even where they have no visible soil in which to fix their roots. The rocks themselves are beautiful, more especially when the smooth white marble is almost hid by foliage. Nearer to the water's edge, plums, mulberries, and figs, vary the scene, and mark the vicinity to some village.

The way amongst these rocks is wild beyond all imagination: sometimes in the bottom, and by the river's side; at other times climbing the steep ascent, or descending from the heights; having on one side a precipice of two or three hundred feet beneath, and, on the other, impending rocks, which threaten destruction to the traveller. Sometimes the river is over-arched by projecting rocks, and hid from view; at other times, looking down, you catch a glimpse of it, sparkling over its rocky bed amongst the foliage: but, whether visible or invisible, it is always heard roaring in the bottom. The way being rugged, and so narrow as only to admit of one mule, occasions the apprehension of danger to be often more than a balance for the pleasure which would

otherwise arise from these wild and most romantic views.

From Pala de Somiedo to Puerte de Somiedo, the rocks are wonderfully rent, and all Nature appears to have been convulsed. The road ascends by a deep ravine: and here the country is engulfed by stupendous rocks: but where the country opens to the north, mountains are discovered beyond mountains, to the distance of many miles, so astonishingly numerous, that the whole bears a resemblance to the ocean when troubled with a furious storm. Immediately surrounding the little village of Gua, which appears as if ready to be swallowed up and buried by the waves, the impending rocks are magnificent beyond description. Amongst these mountains the snow remained undissolved even in August, although not far from luxuriant crops of corn, then fully ripe, and bending to the sickle. The women here are churning; and you see them with leather bags in their hands, containing cream, which they shake, whilst amusing themselves in

walking, or in conversations with their neighbours, till butter be formed.

Piedrafita is a small village, fed by a little valley, and surrounded on every side by mountains. The shepherds' dogs here are large and strong, and well adapted to engage the wolves, which are in great abundance. They wear a spiked collar to protect the neck, and prevent the wolf from fixing on that mortal part. The road continues through a valley, nowhere wider than four hundred feet, shut in by high mountains, with a winding river murmuring over its rocky bed. Before you reach Villasetano, the vale expands, and is adorned with the richest meadows, well watered. There is a castle at this place, belonging to the lord of the village, rather neat than magnificent; but the situation is perfectly enchanting, with the rich vale at its feet, and the lofty mountains in the distant prospect.

Truovano is a village belonging to the monks of the Escorial. Their flock consists

of twenty-eight thousand sheep, which in the summer feed on the mountains, and in the winter travel to the south. To tend this flock, they employ two hundred shepherds; and, for the purpose of feeding them, there is a little mill, with a horizontal water-wheel, working day and night. In an oven which is never cold, bread is baked in the morning for the shepherds, and in the evening for the dogs. Wolves abound in these elevated regions: in winter they become ravenous and bold; and even in summer they commit ravages amongst the flock, if either the shepherd or his dog should happen to sleep.

To Terras de las Duenas, a distance of five leagues, the road winds amongst bare and rugged mountains, and little valleys, with goats browsing; which marks the nature of the adjacent country. In every little opening amongst these mountains, wherever a valley spreads wide enough to afford pasture for a few cows, we find a village of ten or twenty houses; their numbers always bearing

proportion to the quantity of food : and, as the human race everywhere makes strong efforts to increase, we find the inhabitants climbing every spot where the plough can pass. Near Terras de las Duenas the rocks become more bold, rising three or four hundred feet perpendicular, and sometimes overhanging to a great extent ; after winding through the gorges of the mountains, and descending to the little river Luna, famous for its trout. The village is seated at the foot of a mountain. From hence to Leon, a distance of five miles, the country is bold and beautiful, but ill cultivated. It is watered by the Torio and Vernesga, two little streams which unite below the city. In summer they may be called brooks ; in winter they are torrents. The cathedral at Leon is justly admired for its lightness and elegance : it is a Gothic structure, with a lofty spire, highly finished with the most beautiful carving : the windows are composed entirely of painted glass.

The road now begins to descend into a

rich valley, with meadows, corn-fields, and a variety of trees ; and crossing the Ezla, it leads to Mansilla, once a fortified town, as may be seen by the round towers. Santos Martas, Matallana, Alvires, and Cedinos Vecilla, present nothing beautiful to the eye of a traveller. The country, to Medina de Rio Seco, abounds with corn and wine, and improves in the cultivation of the olive. To Valladolid the scene is little varied. This city is highly interesting to a traveller : it has a cathedral, university, palace, and courts of justice. All the public walks are lined with trees : the country around is a perfect garden : it produces white wine of good quality, some silk, and a few olives.

Medina del Campo stands on the Zapardiel, a small river, communicating with the Duero, between Toro and Tordesillas. The surrounding country is naturally fertile ; and it is evident that elms, poplars, mulberries, vines, and olives, if planted, would flourish here. Ataquines is a miserable city, and might easily be mistaken for a village. This country, with industry, and a good market

for its commodities, might be rendered one of the richest in the world. It stretches, without mountains, as far as the eye can reach : it abounds with rivers ; and it enjoys the sun. Here flocks of sheep abound. Aribala is a considerable city ; but some part of the road between these two places is quite desolate. A plantation of firs, and one majestic elm, plainly show, however, that it might produce abundantly. Gutiana-Munoz, Hontoria, and Adanaro, to San Chidrian, present nothing picturesque to the eye. The white wine in this tract of country is excellent ; not so sweet and spicy as that of Foncarrel, near Madrid, but equally delicate in flavour. To Villacastin, a formidable forest must be passed through, famous for robbers. Five leagues farther on, you begin to descend the chain of mountains which separates New and Old Castile. In the course of two miles I arrived near the banks of a mountain-torrent, foaming amid mossy rocks. About a mile farther on is the most beautiful valley that can be imagined : a small stream runs through it, with fine oaks and chesnuts, waving their

majestic branches over its glossy sides, and clothing the rocks quite to their summits. Now and then an ancient church, with a cemetery, covered with moss or ivy, added another charm ; and the little hamlets hanging on the rocks scattered forth wreaths of blue smoke over the dark brown woods. From amongst the lofty broom, and blossomed furze, skipped the nimble herds of mountain-goats ; while the eye, wandering in ecstasy over this enchanting scene, was often attracted by the last rays of the setting sun, descending behind the lofty Guadarama mountains ; or by the imperial eagle, or vulture, sailing in majestic grandeur in the air. At the cottage-doors of this happy valley are often seen lovely forms, like the shepherdesses of romance, surrounded with their smiling babes. Crossing the river, and winding along the steep cliffs of the valley, a fine cascade meets the eye, and you find its source at the summit of the mountain. Some of this chain of mountains is covered with snow in the midst of summer, which renders the night air a chilling blast, let the day have been ever so sultry. The last five

leagues to Madrid is a level country. But I will not longer detain you with my travels and observations. When I arrived at Madrid, I went to lodge in the great street of Toledo, in an hotel, the master of which was a curiosity. He was so much of a dwarf, as to get the surname of Monillo, that is to say, 'Little ape.' Monillo, however, had to recommend him such a fund of humour, that the gravity of a Spaniard ran great risk of being forgotten, whilst in his company. For my part, I could not keep my countenance when I looked at him; and still less, when I heard him speak; he had such odd ideas, and expressed them so comically. With all this levity, he was a man capable of giving good advice. As soon as I told him why I was come to Madrid, he took upon himself to be my tutor; and said to me, "My young Señor, if you have a wish to become page in some great house, I can do you a service, by introducing you to an old citizen, who makes it his business to find situations for those who want them, allowing him a fair recompence." "You will render me a service," said I, "by this introduction: but

there is no hurry for that yet." " I understand you," said Monillo ; " you wish first of all to ramble about the streets of Madrid, and get rid of the crowns that burn in your pocket. Take care, however : in this city you will find a set of wantons, who smell out the purses of new comers, and contrive to unload them." I found this but too true ; for, the first time I went to walk on the Prado, I met a pretty creature, with her duenna, who threw out her lures to me so effectually, that I could not help following her ; and, what is more, she wheedled me so completely, that, in a few days after, I was obliged to entreat Monillo to take me to the old citizen he had talked about ; whom we found with two persons that soon took their leave of us. My little host instantly addressed this friend. " Señor Cortes," said he to him (introducing me), " you see in this young cavalier the only son of one of the most ancient nobles of the Asturias. He is not one of those miserable young noblemen who cannot subsist in their cottages, and think themselves too happy in becoming pages in families just risen from

their plebeian state : this is a man of good family, whom his father sends to Court, to study the great world, and to attach himself to some grandee of the first class, who will be his protector, and help to advance him.” “ Señor Monillo,” said the old citizen, “ it is sufficient that you interest yourself for this young cavalier : I will be of service to him. I know what will suit him ; and I have at this moment a place for him at command. The Marquis of Astorga is in want of a page ; and he is decidedly the most accomplished nobleman about the Court. Would you like this place ?” said he, addressing himself to me. “ Most certainly,” said I ; “ and you have only to tell me what you require as an acknowledgment.” “ Oh ! very little,” said Cortes. “ Besides the consideration of your being introduced here by my friend Señor Monillo, the post of page is not very lucrative ; and I could not in conscience make you pay dear for it : two doubloons will be quite sufficient. It is not so with officers, who expect great wages, and perquisites into the bargain. Now, for example, there are two men just

gone out. Did you observe them? The fat man that you saw is a steward who was out of place. I have got him an appointment with a Duke, who has an income of an hundred thousand crowns per annum, and who loves to keep a good house. I have made the other comptroller of a rich man's house, who is loaded with debts." "Well, and how much," said Monillo, "have you taken, by way of premium, from these gentlemen?" "Why, it has cost the steward two thousand crowns; and the comptroller a thousand pistoles." "By St. Matthew!" said the dwarf, "that is being too disinterested. It is like obliging a neighbour gratuitously. Others are quite different from you: they make these people pay well; for they will pillage their masters, to make up for it." On the assurance of the old citizen, that I should be received next morning amongst the pages of the Marquis of Astorga, I paid him the two doubloons, which was almost all the money I had remaining; and returned to the hotel with my host, who said to me, by the way, "You will be well situated with the Marquis of Astorga." "I have often

heard this nobleman spoken of, as one of the most amiable amongst the grandees : and it is to you, Señor Monillo," said I, " that I owe this obligation, and I can never sufficiently thank you."

The next day I went to Cortes, at the hour he had appointed; and he immediately conducted me to the house of the Marquis of Astorga, where I was completely dazzled with the magnificence that presented itself in every part. It appeared to me more like the palace of a king than the house of a subject. My conductor took me at once to the steward's room, and spoke some time quite low to him. I could not hear what he said; but the steward, whilst listening to him, cast his eyes, from time to time, on me, in a way that made me suppose he did not dislike my appearance; and I was convinced of this, when, after speaking some time to the old citizen, he said to me, "My child, on the good character given you by the Señor Cortes, I will receive you in the number of our pages, as soon as your

clothes are made; and to-day you may begin to board here."

Thus was I at once engaged in the noble employment of page. But what makes the service of grantees doubly delightful is, that you do not feel the yoke of servitude. I no sooner saw myself in the livery of a grandee, than I thought myself a person of consequence. I acquired spirit from my companions; and I became proud of seeing myself engaged in the humiliating function of handing liquor to my lord. I am not astonished that common people should have their heads turned with a sudden elevation to a post of honour, when the office of page is sufficient to inflate a gentleman with pride. My master, it must be confessed, was of so excellent a character and disposition, that all his domestics seemed to serve him from inclination, rather than duty; his mild and amiable behaviour being calculated to soften the rigours of servitude. Instead of punishing them when they committed faults, he defended them, and endeavoured to find

excuses for them. I remember that, one day, a citizen, the father of family, came to complain to him : “ My lord,” said he, “ I demand justice of you : your secretary has seduced my daughter.”—“ What would you have me do in this case ?” said my master. “ My secretary is a Frenchman : you know they are gallant, and think seduction no crime : we must overlook this. But if my porter, who is a German, and addicted to drinking, had done this, I should have hung him.”

In a word, the Marquis of Astorga was not one of those noblemen who are different at different times, and of whom you must watch your opportunity to obtain a promise of a good office. He was a man free from caprice, and of a temper always the same. He received with politeness every one who came to ask favours of him ; he promised, with an appearance of affection and interest, to serve them ; but, in fact, as soon as they were out of sight, he forgot his promises entirely. I was myself deceived by him. A man, who wished to get

into the Minister's office, offered me a hundred pistoles if I would obtain for him the situation of clerk, by the interest of the Marquis of Astorga. I undertook this office. I had the audacity to ask my master for this situation for the man whom I named. "With pleasure, my friend," said the grandee, in the most obliging manner: "I am very happy you have taken advantage of the regard I have for you: you may assure the man he shall be appointed a clerk immediately. I shall ask the Prime-minister for it to-day."

I suffered a month to pass over before I dared return to the charge, lest I might be thought too importunate; and I contented myself with presenting myself at least ten times a day before my master, imagining that the sight of me, and my assiduities, would speak my meaning plain enough, and refresh his memory respecting the promise he had made: but finding he never mentioned it, and time passed away, I thought it would be a good plan to present the person to him who was to pay me

the hundred pistoles ; as it could not fail to produce a good effect. " My lord," said I, " this is the person for whom your lordship has been so kind as to promise your interest with the Minister to procure the situation of clerk." At these words my master started, as if he had been struck with the remembrance of a forgotten dream ; and said, with affected surprise, that I ought to have put him in mind of a thing he had quite forgotten ; but that he would make amends for his fault the first time he saw the Minister or Don Rodriguez." This new promise gave me additional patience, and I waited another month : after which, finding I gained no ground, and was not one jot the nearer than the first day, I took a disgust to the Marquis, and came to the resolution of attaching myself to some one upon whose word more confidence could be placed. I therefore communicated my intention to the old trafficker in places for servants, who, for two more doubloons, got me a situation with the Count of Orgas ; assuring me, this nobleman had the character of being quite

the slave of his promise, and that he loved to do a favour. "But, perhaps," said he, "I ought to warn you, that he is a little singular: he is so quick, hasty, and passionate, he commonly receives very uncivilly any person who comes to him to ask a favour. He begins with giving them no hopes of obtaining what they ask; but he leaves no stone unturned to serve them: he confers obligations with a bad grace." "What does that signify," said I; "he does oblige; and for this reason I like him better than the Marquis of Astorga, who promises continually, and does nothing."

In fact, a few days after I had changed my situation, I perceived that my new master was singular enough, and of quite a different character from the other. The Marquis never found fault with his servants: whether they did their duty well or ill, he seemed equally satisfied with them; whereas the Count reproved his household when they deserved commendation, and sometimes spoke very harshly to them. On a certain occasion, one of them

went very humbly, to implore his protection, and to supplicate him to speak to the king for him. My master immediately put himself in a passion with the suppliant; scolded him, and refused his assistance; but, notwithstanding, he did what was required of him.

I shall never forget a scene I was once witness to. A lady in mourning waited on the Count one morning, and said to him, "My lord, as I know your lordship is very charitable, I dare flatter myself that you will have compassion on me. I am the widow of an officer of the Spanish Guard, who has left me with four children, and but little to maintain them. If you would have the goodness to ask the king for a pension to help me——" My master would not give her time to finish, and, interrupting her with impetuosity, "Ask! oh yes, ask!" said he, in an angry tone: "It is only asking the King for a pension, to obtain it! You fancy, perhaps, that he is mighty prodigal of his favours, do you? Truly, truly, he has many besides you

to give to. If he were to grant pensions to all those who served him, his revenues would not be sufficient for it." The lady would have replied; but he interrupted her again, and said, in a rage, "Leave me, madam! I shall not meddle in this business: I dislike to undertake bad commissions." On saying this, he turned his back on her; and after dressing, went to the king's levee, leaving the widow quite petrified with the ungracious reception she had met with. However, whether the widow was not easily repulsed, or had been informed of my master's oddities, she followed him, in hopes of meeting him again, and getting another opportunity of speaking to him. She had the patience to wait for him three hours at the palace gate; and as he was about to get into his carriage to return home, she exclaimed, "Ah, my lord! have pity on my family!"—"Go, go!" said he hastily: "the king will give you a pension of a hundred pistoles."

To sum up the character of the Count of Orgas; he was an amiable brute, and

perhaps the most generous nobleman of the Court. He had, amongst others, one good quality, which is very rare; that is, he never failed to give a maintenance to servants who had lived some years with him. For me he conceived an affection; and I should without doubt have made my fortune with him, if I had not had the misfortune to become a rival of one of his gentlemen, in the affections of a young waiting-woman of the Countess of Orgas. We both loved this little creature, without knowing that we were rivals: and to me it is uncertain whether he or I was the favoured lover; for she treated both in such a manner, that each one flattered himself he was the favourite. But however secretly an amorous intrigue may begin, it is not long concealed. My rival found out, I will not tell you how, that the sound of my guitar was heard in the night, and that I sought to please Inez: upon which he called me out. I flew to the rendezvous: we seized our swords, and arranging ourselves, began a fierce combat. My gentleman, however, finding all at once

his courage cool, said, "Señor Page, hear what I have to say : an idea has just come across me that abates my anger : we ought to understand each other before we fight. ~~What are we going to do?~~ In destroying each other, we destroy the reputation of Inez. Is that proper conduct for two Spaniards ? The honour of a mistress, although she is unfaithful, should be always dear. But why do I say unfaithful ? I have no proof of her falsehood. Should I, upon bare suspicion, give myself up to jealous rage ?"—"No, without doubt not," said I ; "that is unreasonable ; and if you repent having been too hasty, I am well satisfied not to push matters further. I am not so anxious to cut your throat, as to refuse to listen to reason : and it is enough for me, that you have found me ready to give you satisfaction." At these words, my rival, assuming the look of a friend, embraced me, and said, "Don Marcos, forget what is passed. I ask for your friendship, and give you mine."

It was thus that two fierce enemies, ready

to cut each other's throat, became good friends. However, the cause of the quarrel continuing, war was ready to break out every moment. But the Count of Orgas soon re-established good order. A valet-de-chambre of the house, who was one of your prying servants, and had learned the whole affair, took occasion, from hatred to me and my rival, to inform his lord of our quarrel, and the cause of it. Upon which, our master, naturally severe, turned us both out of doors, as disturbers of the tranquillity of his family.

I now returned to my good friend Monillo, who, being acquainted with the steward of the Duke of Peneranda, had interest enough with him to get me received as page to this nobleman, who was turned of sixty. He was possessed of no less mildness and sweetness of manner than the Marquis of Astorga, without having his fault of not keeping his word: but though he was exempt from this fault, he had another, which made him ridiculous to the world. In his old age he could not desist

from the gallantries of youth, to which he had been much addicted. He was in love with a coquette, whom he made his idol. He passed whole days with her, saying extravagant things, admiring all she said, and often even what she had most defective in her person. Like the Balbus of Horace, he admired even the polypus of his mistress.

You may well imagine that such an idolater had to pay dear for his folly. The lady he loved sold at a high price all the favours she shewed him. Besides running him to an enormous expense, she was not so scrupulously faithful to him. Report even went so far as to state that she had more than one substitute for him; and it was not without foundation. My old master, however, gave no credit to it; but piquing himself on making love like a knight-errant, he would have thought himself guilty of a crime in suspecting the virtue of his mistress. A fine lesson for lovers, who often, on false appearances, become a prey to jealousy!

The Duke of Peneranda was this delightful

dupe to his princess, when he received me into his service. I lost no time in gaining his affections. "Page," said he, on the first day, "your person pleases me, and I shall make choice of you for the execution of some secret commissions. At the same time he put into my hand a note, to carry, on his behalf, to the nymph, whose name was Donna Hortensia, and lived not far from our house. I acquitted myself of this honourable commission, like one who is accustomed to excel in such employments. I presented the letter with a graceful air to the lady, who, never having seen me, looked at me some time with a scrutinizing eye. When she opened the note, I found that, in reading it, she affected to be much pleased. One would have thought it was the tender Florisbelle, reading one of the letters of her dear Don Belianis. Two or three times she fell into a sort of fainting fit, with the excess of her delight. If I had not been better informed by Monillo, I should have thought Donna Hortensia desperately in love with my master, she acted her part so well.

After having played this game, she entered upon another. "Page," said she, "you now live with the Duke of Peneranda. I congratulate you, my friend. You could not be in the service of a more amiable nobleman." "Madam," said I, "although I have only had the honour to serve him four and twenty hours, I have thought myself fortunate, more than once, to have found so good a situation. He has told me I have the happiness to please him: I trust he will not have to repent his favourable opinion of me: I shall do all in my power to gain his good opinion, and to make myself worthy of your ladyship's protection." "I grant it you from this moment," said she; "you appear to merit it: Go, I promise to speak in your favour, and it depends upon me only to make your fortune with him." I naturally supposed it was only to get me into her interest, that she spoke in this flattering way to me; but, pretending to attribute it solely to her goodness, I returned her a thousand thanks, and came back to the house; where I was no sooner arrived, than the Duke sent for me.

"Well, page," said he, "you have seen Hortensia! What do you think of that divine creature? Is it not true that she justifies all the affection I have for her?" "My lord," replied I, (well aware what fables I was to amuse him with,) "Donna Hortensia is a perfect beauty, and worthy of the attachment of a person of your merit. But charming as she is, you must be less pleased with her attractions than with the ardent love with which she burns for you. I observed her while she read your letter; and I perceived, spite of all her caution, that she could hardly contain the pleasure she felt. Sometimes she laughed; sometimes she had the most lively transports; then a rapture of tenderness; and sometimes became quite languishing."

Any other person than this witless lover would have distrusted a story so completely absurd; but I knew (credulous fool that he was!) that I ran no risk with him. "I am delighted," said he, "that you have made these observations: you see, clearly, the

injustice that is done to Donna Hortensia, by those who believe she is not attached to me." "Oh! for that matter, my lord," said I, "I can contradict them, from my own eyes: after what I have seen, I cannot doubt you are tenderly beloved." "I believe the same," said the Duke; "and I rest assured of possessing the heart of my mistress, as she does mine. I taste the joys of mutual love, without troubling myself about talking gossips." "That is the way, my lord," said I, "to avoid the pains of love; you are right to repose confidence in the faith of your lady."—"I have a great right to distrust all detraction," said the Duke: "Hortensia possesses both greatness of soul and elevation of sentiment. Even in her sleep, nothing but elevated ideas are present to her mind. Yesterday, for example, I went to see her after dinner: she was taking her *siesta*, and was laid upon her couch. I approached her without waking her, and sat down to contemplate the lovely creature. I do not know what she dreamt of; but, in dreaming, she twice pronounced this word, 'Page!' Another

woman would have said 'footman;' whereas Hortensia, whose ideas are all upon a scale of grandeur, said, 'page.'" At these words, I was not a little tempted to laugh, at the expense of my master; but, restraining the impulse, I even applauded the ridiculous idea of the good lord; to whom I said, to flatter him, that I did not doubt it was about him she was dreaming. "You have guessed it," said he, laughing, with a vain coxcomical air; "she has confessed it to me!"

Two days after this conversation, the Duke sent me again to Hortensia, with another note; which she read with the same demonstrations of joy as the former. Afterward, we had a second conversation, in which she asked me a thousand questions, as to what province I was born in, and who were my parents. When I had satisfied her curiosity, she wished to know why I had quitted my home, and with what intention I had come to Madrid. I told her it was to attach myself to some grandee, and put myself under his protection. "I am very glad, then," she said, "that chance has placed

you with the Duke of Peneranda: I can do you some good offices with him: I will even tell you that I am disposed to serve you; and you shall find, ere long, I will serve you." At these words, I poured forth a profusion of thanks, in terms that evinced the most lively gratitude on my part. As this obliging discourse led me to perceive something was meant on her part, I had the vanity to guess at it; and the next time I went there, I found I was not mistaken. Hortensia this day did not think proper to see me. Celia, her old servant, and the depositary of her secrets, received me, and said, "If you have a note for my mistress, give it me; I will deliver it to her, when she has taken a little repose: for she is indisposed, and for the last four and twenty hours has had a most incessant head-ache. Oh, execrable love! a thousand times execrable!" "What do you say, Celia?" cried I, with astonishment: "why this imprecation? My master would be much chagrined, madam: he, who makes her his divinity, ought he to be troubled with any jealous fears?" "Nonsense!" interrupted the waiting-woman;

"this nobleman believes himself too well beloved, to be capable of feeling jealousy. It is not that which causes my lady's headaches;—but," added she, "not to let the cat out of the bag, I must hold my tongue:—if you had not such a young beard, I could tell you a great deal." "Oh, faith! Señora Celia," interrupted I, in my turn, "you insult my youth. Be convinced that I am capable of keeping a secret of importance; and although I am a page, I am very discreet: if you doubt it, put me to the test." "That," replied the Duenna, "is what I have a great mind to do: you will learn some news that will surprise you very much. My mistress, since the last conversation she had with you, can do nothing but dream, sigh, groan, and talk of you. Can you tell me what it means?" "I will tell you," said I; "you and your mistress have a mind to laugh at my expense; and you would make me believe that she does not disdain to cast her eyes on me; in short, that I have made a tender impression on her. You have both the curiosity to see if I am coxcomb enough to believe such a thing. Now own, Celia, if

you have not concerted this plot to amuse my lord, and to have a laugh at my expense. Although I have not much experience, I can see this is a trick to try my head, and not my heart."

"I am delighted," said the old Duenna, "that you have so little presumption, as to take things as you understand them: all young men are not so modest; and a thousand others, in your place, would have a better opinion of themselves, than to think as you do: but," added she, "you must not remain in your error. Is it, indeed, only modesty that makes you refuse to believe that my mistress loves you? Be sincere and open: you do not think, perhaps, that there is enough in this conquest to content you." "Pardon me," I cried; "of all the women in the world, your lady is the one I love best, and that I should most delight to please." "Is that true, page?" said she, with emotion. "Do you speak sincerely? Does my mistress please you?" "I adore her!" I cried, with transport: "I should be more mad than my master with her love."

Celia leaped with as much joy at these words as if it was herself that I was speaking of; and said, giving me a tap on the shoulder, "Go, you rogue, go; you are more happy than an honest man. Return here to-morrow at this same hour: Donna Hortensia will have no more head-aches, and you shall have a decisive conversation with her."

Although this was all plain and clear, and I had every reason to flatter myself with the sweetest hopes, I dared not, nevertheless, give way to them. I feared that the mistress and the servant only wished to laugh at me, and that the adventure would end in the disgrace of my pageship; for I could not persuade myself that the mistress of a grandee would deign to fix her affections on me. Harassed with a thousand agitating reflections, I returned home; and on the following day I went again to those ladies, with as much distrust as love.

I do not doubt (said Don Marcos) that you wish to have an account of this

decisive conversation with Hortensia ; and what was the result of it. I will give you the particulars. I found the lady in her apartment, seated upon a sofa : she was in a becoming dishabille, which made her look so irresistible, that I should have fallen in love with her, if the business had not been already done. "Madam, said I, on entering, "I am come to surrender myself with a good grace, for your diversion : for I do not doubt that you and Celia have resolved to divert yourselves at my expense, in making me believe I have attracted your attention. But I am not the dupe of the trick ; I know too much to dare to flatter myself with so much happiness. If "Hear me, Don Marcos," interrupted Hortensia, with a very serious air ; "you deceive yourself : there is no trick here, and there shall be none. Speak, on your honour, Do you love me ?" I was a little surprised at such a question, and made so abruptly. "Madam," replied I, "what mortal can defend his heart against so many charms : one look alone from you . . ." "Answer exactly what I ask," interrupted she again, with precipitation ;

“no subterfuge, no evasion. Have you any affection for me?” “For you, madam!” I cried, -with transport, taking the chance of what might happen: “Oh, heavens! never lover burnt with so fierce a flame! I should look upon myself as the happiest of men, if I saw my destiny united to yours. Pardon me, divine Hortensia, this rash avowal, which I could not resist; but it became necessary to reply to your question.” “I am satisfied with your answer,” said the lady; “and to make my frankness equal yours, I will also discover my sentiments to you. From the first moment I saw you, I felt a growing inclination for you; and since that time, this inclination has so much increased, that I have taken the resolution to offer you my hand, and, with that, thirty thousand pistoles that I possess, some in gold, some in precious stones. Let us leave Madrid: with this fortune we can live at our ease, and retire into whatever country of the earth you choose. There we will live the rest of our days, in a delightful union of hearts and souls; and our union being lasting, Heaven will not be offended.”

I believe, Señor Gonzalez, you are dazzled, as I was, with this proposal. It is true, there were two points of view, and both not equally pleasing. When I only looked at the person of Hortensia, and her fine fortune, it was a great match for a page, with my small fortune: but when I came to reflect, on the other side, the thoughts of marrying a woman of her reputation, it was a miserable pill for a gentleman. “What must I think of it?” said I; “my father and my grandfather preferred honour to wealth, and would have despised any but chaste wives; but I, degenerating from their delicacy, would dishonour my blood by an infamous marriage. There is nothing a Spaniard dreads like horns; the very mention of them is an insult; and the sight of them makes his blood boil.” Thus, during some moments, I listened to the pride of birth; but it was all I could do for my ancestors.

I accepted the proposition with all the marks of love and gratitude imaginable;

and, throwing myself at the feet of the lady, "Beautiful Hortensia!" said I, "is it then permitted me to hope that you will not disdain to join your destiny to mine? there is no happiness equal to that which you will confer on me." In saying these words, I kissed, with sweet emotion, one of the hands she gave to me; and I read in her looks, that she shared the joy she had imparted to me. After a most tender conversation, it became a question with us to determine on the country we should fix on for our retreat. I proposed the Asturias. "Let us go," said I to Hortensia, "let us go, if you will consent, and live with my father, in his castle, near Oviedo, between Penaflor and Monserrat. It is a very delightful spot, and my father and I will spare no pains to make your life happy." "All situations will please me," said the lady, "with you. Let us not lose our time: write to your father, to ask his consent; for we must have that before we execute our plan."

"I cannot help here trembling for you,"

cried I, interrupting Don Marcos in this place: "I much fear that the Señor de Girafa will refuse his consent to this marriage. These lordly Hidalgos are commonly very stately in making an alliance, and study much about the *pro's* and *con's*." "That is very true, in general," said the Asturian; "but my father is poor and avaricious: these two qualities made me answer for his consent: accordingly, he gave it me without difficulty; it seemed so advantageous a business for him and myself. Besides, he knew many Nobles, who, for the sake of repairing their castles, falling into ruin, made no difficulty in forming a match beneath them: for money serves, at all times, as the prop of indigent nobility. In a word, the thirty thousand pistoles threw dust in the eyes of my father; who, listening only to interest, hastened to write to me, and begged I would not let so good an opportunity of putting both at our ease escape me. Upon which, we took all necessary steps to arrive at the conclusion of a marriage, equally desired on both sides; and we were united with

the utmost privacy.”——“And the Duke of Peneranda,” said I to Don Marcos, “what said he to all this? I am on thorns to know.” “You shall hear,” said Girafa; “and it is assuredly the most curious part of this adventure.”

This good nobleman, still infatuated with the idea that Hortensia loved him to excess, although he was not a desirable lover, lived happy and contented in his error. But the lady and I became weary of deceiving him, and we prepared to set out for the Asturias. Nevertheless, to keep some terms with a nobleman of his consequence, my wife, before we set out, wrote to him in these terms.

“DUKE,

“We must part: I have had a dream, that I consider as a secret warning from Heaven, and which has detached me from the world. I go to bury myself in a retreat, consecrated to penitence; and I bid you an eternal adieu.”

I carried this note myself to the Duke, who said to me, after having read it, "Page," is it possible that a dream can make so strong an impression?" "Yes, upon a woman, my lord," I replied. "Many women have the weakness to believe in dreams; and you know that, recently, an actress of the Prince's theatre, on the faith of a dream, quitted the stage, to retire into a monastery, where she actually leads a most exemplary life." The Duke of Peneranda appeared, at first, extremely mortified to see himself robbed of his idol; but this virtuous nobleman, believing it to be the will of Heaven, left her mistress of her own actions. You see the manner in which Hortensia got rid of her old lover; and you shall see, on my part, how I separated from him, without his suspecting me. I managed to affront the steward, who turned me off directly. After this, we left Madrid early one fine morning, and took the road to the Asturias.

The good man saw, with great pleasure, the arrival of our mules, laden with mer-

chandise ; which seemed to him great riches : and this was the first thing that drew his attention. I presented to him his daughter-in-law ; and he gave her a most affectionate reception. He was much pleased with her person ; and, above all, he admired her appearance of modesty ; which he could not reconcile with the idea he had formed of a person full of life and vivacity. He complimented me on my choice, before her : “ My son,” said he, “ I approve your choice ; and I give you warning, that you will not have all my affection : you will henceforward have only a part.”

If Don Vincent found the person of my wife pleasing, he was still more charmed with her fortune, when I showed it to him. “ There are in these sacks twenty thousand pistoles,” said I. “ How ! twenty thousand !” interrupted he, with precipitation : “ you wrote to me, that your wife would bring you thirty thousand pistoles in marriage, either in gold or precious stones.” “ Pardon me,” said I : “ I have twenty thousand

with me ; ten thousand in diamonds, ten thousand in gold ; and I have ten thousand more in the hands of Abel Zacharie, a famous banker, of Madrid." My father groaned at these last words : " Ah, unhappy youth ! " said he, " what have you done ! You have trusted your money " . . . " It is in safety," I replied hastily : " Zacharie is a safe man ; he cannot fail." " He cannot fail ! " said Don Vincent, with indignation : " what indiscreet confidence ! I doubt if at this moment " " I repeat it, father," said I ; " Zacharie is safe : I have given him my money at great interest, after taking good security from him." " At great interest, do you say ? " said Don Vincent ; " that makes me suspect him the more : you ought to withdraw your property directly ; I even fear he is at this moment a bankrupt."

I took great pains to comfort my father ; but I could not bring it about, till I had promised him to return directly to Madrid, to draw the ten thousand pistoles out of the hands of Zacharie : and I was obliged, to

tranquillize the mind of the good man, to hasten my departure; notwithstanding the repugnance I felt at leaving, so soon, a wife for whom I every day felt more affection. On her side, Hortensia, although much mortified with my journey, consented to it, to please her father-in-law, who was extremely flattered with her complaisance.

Fifteen days, then, after my arrival in the Asturias, I mounted my horse, and, followed by a servant, as well mounted as myself, I took the road to Madrid, and travelled with all haste; much less intent on easing the fears of Don Vincent, than to return as speedily as possible to my dear Hortensia. I had no sooner arrived here, than I waited on the Señor Zacharie, who asked what he could do to serve me. I told him I came to request he would pay me what he owed me. The banker turned pale at these words. "How!" said he, "do you want to draw your money already? Do you distrust my credit? Can it be possible that any evil reports are got about in Madrid of Abel Zacharie?" "No,

Señor Abel," I cried, " your credit is too well established to run any chance of being injured : but I am about making a large purchase of land in my neighbourhood, and I want all my money." " Oh ! that is another thing," said Zacharie : " I only wish to please you ; and, to prove it, I will remit you, in the course of this month (although you know it was agreed between us that I should have three months' notice), your ten thousand pistoles." I thanked the Señor Abel for his obliging promise ; and I wrote to my father, to inform him, believing I should set his mind at ease : but he let me see, by a hasty answer, that nothing can satisfy a man, restless, avaricious, and distrustful.

Don Marcos de Girafa finished, in this place, the recital of his adventures. After which I said, " Then you are only waiting for the payment of your pistoles, to retrace your steps to the Asturias ? As soon as they are received, adieu Madrid and all its charms." " Yes, Señor Gonzalez," he answered, " I

shall set out, the morning after my business is settled, to rejoin my dear Hortensia, to whom I owe the happiness of my life. You ought to pardon the impatience I have to see her again." "I acknowledge its justness," I said, "too much, not to approve it, however I may regret your departure."

We saw each other five or six days after this ; and at last the day of repayment came. We mutually embraced, with tears in our eyes. "Adieu ! Gonzalez," said Girafa : "perhaps we may meet again : Fate may perhaps once more bring us together : but, if we are doomed to meet no more, at least let us preserve a tender remembrance of each other." Thus it is that most intimacies formed in coffee-houses conclude : they terminate in regret, and are easily forgotten.

BOOK V.

I WAS not much longer afflicted with the loss of Don Marcos, than I had been with that of Don Ramirez ; and I soon made a new acquaintance. As I had nothing to do but divert myself, I went very often to the King's levee ; and sometimes to the coffee-houses ; where I was extremely pleased. I saw new faces enter every moment ; amongst which were always some that gave me occasion to make my observations. Among the rest were certain poets, who never failed to stun our ears with their disputes and their verses : they were often like the beating of a drum, or the clapper of a bell ; and we laughed heartily at their expense. But they cared so little for that, that it seemed as if they took pleasure in making themselves ridiculous.

But I was most diverted in these places at hearing twenty people speak at once; some debating on military affairs, others on affairs of gallantry, or comical adventures: all which formed a mixture of sounds, a confusion of discordant voices, that delighted me. Sometimes, however, I left the coffee-house with the head-ache, and I was obliged to walk in the Prado to get rid of it. I had also, from time to time, the curiosity to attend the levee of the Count Olivares; and, mixing in the crowd, I observed all things with attention, and often witnessed some very interesting scenes. The first time I went there, for example, I saw one which drew tears from my eyes, "albeit unus'd to the melting mood." The reader may perhaps wish to know the cause. I hope he will not say, that it "drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek." My gentle friend, be not impatient; you shall hear why I wept; and weep with me, if sympathizing pity dwells in your heart: for I have a tale to tell that will melt all those whose hearts are tuned to the soft melody of making the widow's

heart sing for joy, and gladly seize the moment to wipe the tear from the cheek of misery. Let the Priest and the Levite, and their disciples (for, alas ! they are a numerous tribe, who pass by misery, and heed it not), say, if they ever felt a joy equal to that of the merciful Samaritan, when he poured oil and wine into a wound ?—But to return to my story. There came into the room a decrepit old man, with a very long grey beard, and tattered clothes. He brought a petition in his hand, which he presented to the Prime Minister: “ Good man, what is it about ? ” said he. “ My lord,” he replied, “ to celebrate the accession of the King to the throne. You have thrown open all the prisons ; and I am come out of mine, after being shut up these six-and-thirty years.” At these words a confused murmur resounded in the rooms ; and the Count himself, struck with astonishment, asked the prisoner why he had been so long in confinement ? “ I do not know,” said the old man ; “ I only know that I was taken up, and put into confinement, six-and-thirty years ago, by order of the King, as

they then told me: and what must surprise your Excellency is, that during so many years I have never been brought to trial, nor spoken to any one but the keepers who supplied me with food. At last, they told me they were forbidden to answer me, if by accident I happened to speak to them. To complete my misfortune, in coming out of this purgatory, I have sought my family, and found them not. I had a father, a mother, a wife, and two children: all are dead, or lost to me: I am without money, and must be reduced to beggary, if you will not have pity on me."

All the audience, moved with compassion, waited, in profound silence, the answer of the Count; who replied with mildness, "Well, my friend, what do you ask for in your petition?" "My lord," said the old man, "I most humbly supplicate your Excellency, as a favour, to order me immediately back to prison." "I will grant your petition," said the Minister, smiling; "go, return to your prison: the keeper, by my order, shall give you clothes, linen, a comfortable room, and

a place at his table, with the liberty of going out when you please, and doing what you think proper." At this answer of the Count, the room resounded with universal applause. But this was not all: the Minister did not restrict his humanity to converting the miserable dungeon of the old man into an inn; he added to it a small pension, to brighten the setting sun of this heir of misery, the meridian of whose life had been one invariable scene of wretchedness. How enviable would be the lives of the great, would they seek out misfortune; would they allow misery easy access to them, to tell its tale of woe, and be relieved in a manner similar to this example of munificence! How nearly would they then resemble their great Creator and Redeemer! How much might they make earth like Heaven! How much more real satisfaction would their hearts feel, than in the idle glitter of the world! envying and backbiting one another; while, in the midst of mirth, their hearts are sad.—Though there was not a dry eye in the room, all felt a superior joy, when the old man withdrew, to any sensation ever felt

on retiring from a scene of splendor ; and were ready to exclaim, “ It is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting ! ”

This incident did much honour to the Prime Minister ; and occasioned great satisfaction, from the hope that he would always do justice. At the beginning of his administration, he affected to please the people, to interest them in his favour : but he did not in the end always show such humanity. To finish the history of the old prisoner ; I have been told, that, from that time, he made so little use of his permission to go out, that he hardly ever left the prison, having been accustomed so much to confinement.

The coffee-house where I got acquainted with Girafa was the one I most frequented. Besides meeting with many pleasant cavaliers I liked to converse with, I was sure to see or hear some pleasant adventures. I recollect one that I will relate to you :—Being one day in this coffee-house, there came in

two officers, one of whom was a very striking figure; very tall; and, by his martial appearance, drew every body's eye upon him. "Who is this man?" said I to a cavalier, who was sitting near me, in a low voice. "It is," he answered, "Don Torribio Truegno, Captain of the King's guards, called Monteros; and, without contradiction, one of the bravest officers that his Majesty has in his service. He has, as you see, the air of a warrior; which perfectly agrees with his name. Look attentively at him." "The more I look at him," said I, "the more I admire him: but why has he his arm in a sling?" "He has had a wound," replied the cavalier, with a smile; "and the history of that wound is rather amusing; I would willingly give it you, if he were not in the room." "Well," said I, "let us retire into another;" which we accordingly did; and, in a low voice, he gave me the following relation:—

"About eight days ago, this Don Torribio Truegno was going, in the morning, on a hunting party, near the river Guadalaxara; and was accompanied by two of his soldiers,

as well mounted as himself. When they were come upon a plain that is between Mondajar and Buendia, a little man with grey hair, mounted on a small horse, came civilly up to him, and said, 'Señor Cavalier, you are, without doubt, ignorant that you are here upon the grounds of a gentleman, who lives upon his estate, and will not suffer any one to hunt without his permission; therefore strangers must be warned off his grounds.' The captain, naturally hasty and passionate, looking at him from head to foot, answered, 'Señor Hidalgo, are you aware to whom you speak?' 'Yes, Señor,' said the little cavalier, 'I know that you are the Commandant of the Guard of Monteros; and I politely ask you not to' . . . 'How!' hastily interrupted Don Torribio; 'you mean to insult me, I suppose, by this request? and, if I do not go, will you force me to meet you sword in hand?' 'I should be sorry to be obliged to come to that extremity,' said the gentleman; 'but, if it must be so, I am resolute.'

"The captain, on these words, laughing

contemptuously, said, in a tone of raillery, 'Oh! faith, my little friend, I am very curious to see how you will fight. Will you have the goodness to satisfy my curiosity?' 'With all my heart,' said the old cavalier; 'I will willingly give you this satisfaction, since you ask it with so much good manners.' In saying these words, he dismounted, tied his horse to a tree, and, drawing his sword, presented himself with a bold front before his enemy; who, despising him, set about defending himself very carelessly; as if he felt ashamed to see himself engaged with such a feeble adversary. Things, however, did not turn out advantageously for Don Torribio. The little gentleman, who was an excellent fencer, gave him a thrust which wounded him in the right arm, in such a manner, that the chief of the Monteros, feeling his wound would not permit him to continue the combat, mounted his horse, boiling with rage and anger, and returned at full speed to Madrid; his two guards following, laughing in their sleeve at this tragi-comic adventure.

“About two hundred paces from the field of battle, our captain, meeting a Hidalgo, mounted on a mule, stopped him. “Señor cavalier,” said he to him, “pray tell me who that little gentleman is, with grey hair, who lives in the neighbourhood of Mondajar.” “I know who you mean,” said the Hidalgo; “it is Don Cæsar de Peralte, an officer who has served a long time with great honour in the army; and at present enjoys his laurels in his own castle.” Don Torribio Truegno, after some reflection, recollecting that it was his own fault that he had received an insult, resolved generously to cultivate the friendship of Don Cæsar, instead of seeking revenge. As soon as he had formed this determination, he ordered his two guards to return, and invite Peralte to come next day and dine with him at Madrid. The soldiers obeyed their orders; and, when they returned, informed their captain that Don Cæsar would not fail to accept his invitation. Don Torribio also invited, to meet his adversary, three officers, his friends; to whom he

had scarcely related the adventure of the preceding day, as they were sitting together, than they perceived Peralte, mounted on his little horse. As soon as the chief of the Monteros saw him, he went directly to him, with his arm in a sling. He even held the stirrup, to help him to alight; and conducting him to the officers, "Gentlemen," said he, "give me leave to introduce to you Señor Don Cæsar de Peralte, my conqueror. You see the man who well knows how to punish an intruder hunting on his grounds without permission." "Señor," said the little gentleman, "you are at liberty to hunt there when you please." "I thank you for your politeness," said the captain; "but I have a request to make, the granting of which will give me much more pleasure; and that is, your friendship." Don Cæsar answered these compliments like a man who knew the world, and the two cavaliers became the best of friends."

One evening, after walking a long time in the delightful meadows of St. Jeromè, I was returning quietly to my hotel, when,

passing by the window of a lower room in the street of Toledo, I heard my name pronounced in a loud voice. I stopped short to see the person who had uttered it, and I was not a little astonished at recognising the coquette Bernadina, my first love. She, on her part, appeared much astonished to see me, and, anxious to have some conversation, begged me to walk into the house, which I did most willingly: I was very glad to have an opportunity of learning the present state of her affairs.

An old woman, exactly like Pepita, whom I thought I knew well, came to open the street-door, and conducted me into a very good room, where I was received by Bernadina, who appeared delighted with our happy meeting, and showed me as much friendship as if she had been ever faithful. "Well, Gonzalez," said she, "chance has brought us together again, after seven years of separation: I cannot express to you all the joy I feel on this occasion; but tell me, my friend, what are you doing at Madrid? Have you any good situation here? In a

word, are you satisfied with your condition?" I dared not make an avowal of my wealth to such a companion, for fear I might repent it: on the contrary, I affected to be in but indifferent circumstances; and I replied that I could scarcely keep the wolf from the door.

"Is it possible?" said she: "Poor young man! what a misfortune that you are not in opulence; for you are naturally very generous. I often think of the easy way in which you spent your money at Salamanca." "I remember it well also," replied I, smiling; "I have not forgot those little wheedling ways you had to ease me of my money." "Do not mention that, Gonzalez," said she, with a grave aspect: "let us draw a veil over what has passed: I have purified my morals, and have only one lover. The Count of Medellin adores me, and uses all his endeavours to make me happy. He sets no bounds to his liberality; and I repay his attachment with the most inviolable fidelity; and, between ourselves, he well deserves it. Besides being handsome, his manners are

enchanting. Instead of imitating his equals, who keep their mistresses shut up, and invisible to men, he leaves me to enjoy entire liberty. He permits me to receive his friends, consisting of Counts, Marquises, and Dukes. I have even, with his permission, and under his sanction, established a little assembly to amuse them in my house, where many of these noblemen come three times a week, to play at cards, or have music, and conclude with a little supper."

"Explain yourself, on this head," said I, if you please. "If you entertain these noblemen at your own expense, it must cost you a great deal; for these sorts of entertainment are not like the suppers of an anchorite." "No, truly not," said Bernardina: "but then I am not at the expense. I will tell you how I manage, to make people of this consequence pay. If, for example, there should be sitting by me a Duke or Marquis, I draw them aside slyly, one after the other, and whisper in their ear, 'My lord Duke or Marquis, the supper comes to so much.' The nobleman under-

stands what this means, and answers, 'Yes ;' accompanying the monosyllable with three or four doubloons. I afterwards do the same with all the other noblemen ; and manage so well, that each one fancies he alone has paid for the supper."

"It seems, then," said I, bursting out laughing, "that you have found out a new and ingenious mode of cheating. I suppose your good aunt taught you all this." "Exactly so," said Bernadina : "I follow this method, and I make a good income from it. But, now you speak of my aunt, you do not ask me about her." "True enough," returned I ; "what is become of this dear aunt ? She used to interest herself kindly for me : pray tell me where she really is ?" "At Toledo," said Bernadina ; "she has lived three years there with the Commandant of Castile ; but the lease is out : she is coming directly to join me at Madrid." "I am delighted," said I, "that the profits of your suppers will increase, for I need not ask if the Señora Dalfa is still charming." "She is still pleasing," said Bernadina ;

“but I cannot absolutely say that she is not a little changed: if I did, I should give the lie to her last letters, which mention, that every morning at her toilette she finds some charm wanting; that she has not that brilliancy which she possessed in her early youth; and that her skin begins to grow brown and look pimply.”

“That evil,” replied I, “is not without remedy: there are certain means of preserving a fine tint; and I am acquainted with an apothecary, who is the first man in the world for metamorphosing an old black wrinkled hag into a young girl.” “You are now joking,” said Bernadina.” “Not at all,” returned I: “I never spoke more seriously.” “Ah, my dear Gonzalez!” said she with transport, “if it really is so, do, pray, make me acquainted with this first man in the world.” “He is not unknown to you,” said I: “open your eyes, and you will see him before you.” “What do I hear?” exclaimed she, in the greatest surprise: “What! *you* possess such a secret? I cannot believe you: if you did, you would

be richer than all the grandees put together."

To gain some belief in the mind of Bernadina, I was obliged to give her a narration of my voyage to Italy, and to explain to her how, and why, I became the associate of an apothecary. I expatiated upon the surprising effects of the pomatum and wash, invented by the chemist, Potoschi, my master; and which he had taught me to compound. Bernadina listened with a greedy ear: she was particularly delighted with what I said of the Baroness de Conca, and Donna Blanche Sorba, her mother. She could not imagine how two women, such as I described them, black and full of pimples, could appear more beautiful than the day, when they had made themselves up with the wash and pomatum.

"Gonzalez, my dear friend," said she, "I now look upon you as quite a divine man: I implore your assistance for my aunt, and I have besides a little want of it myself: teach me your secret in return for our past

“ but I cannot absolutely say that she is not a little changed : if I did, I should give the lie to her last letters, which mention, that every morning at her toilette she finds some charm wanting ; that she has not that brilliancy which she possessed in her early youth ; and that her skin begins to grow brown and look pimply.”

“ That evil,” replied I, “ is not without remedy : there are certain means of preserving a fine tint ; and I am acquainted with an apothecary, who is the first man in the world for metamorphosing an old black wrinkled hag into a young girl.” “ You are now joking,” said Bernadina.” “ Not at all,” returned I ; “ I never spoke more seriously.” “ Ah, my dear Gonzalez !” said she with transport, “ if it really is so, do, pray, make me acquainted with this first man in the world.” “ He is not unknown to you,” said I : “ open your eyes, and you will see him before you.” “ What do I hear ?” exclaimed she, in the greatest surprise : “ What ! you possess such a secret ? I cannot believe you : if you did, you would

be richer than all the grandees put together."

To gain some belief in the mind of Bernadina, I was obliged to give her a narration of my voyage to Italy, and to explain to her how, and why, I became the associate of an apothecary. I expatiated upon the surprising effects of the pomatum and wash, invented by the chemist, Potoschi, my master; and which he had taught me to compound. Bernadina listened with a greedy ear: she was particularly delighted with what I said of the Baroness de Conca, and Donna Blanche Sorba, her mother. She could not imagine how two women, such as I described them, black and full of pimples, could appear more beautiful than the day, when they had made themselves up with the wash and pomatum.

"Gonzalez, my dear friend," said she, "I now look upon you as quite a divine man: I implore your assistance for my aunt, and I have besides a little want of it myself: teach me your secret in return for our past

through your hands she will grow young again. You will make her appear more lovely than ever.”—“She may reckon upon that, I can tell you,” said I: “after the instance of the Baroness and her mother, no face need despair: they were two monsters, in pure nature; I made them celestial beauties.” “Ah, Gonzalez!” said Bernadina, quite in ecstasies with what I told her, “you are a wonderful mortal. How happy I am I met with you again! When you have restored to my aunt all the beauty she has lost, you must teach me the art of being eternally young.”—“Ah, you rogue!” said I, “you have no occasion to learn yet.” “I can go on a little longer,” she replied; “but years glide on so quickly, that one cannot too soon take measures against its ravages.”

Scarcely had the niece and I finished our conversation, when the aunt awoke. She no sooner learnt I was in the house, than she dressed herself with all speed, and came down into the room where I was. As soon as she saw me, she came, with an affectionate

air, and 'honoured me with an embrace: "Señor Gonzalez," said she, "I participate with my niece in the joy she feels in seeing you again; but tell me truly, may I credit the astonishing letter she has written to me?" "Yes, madam," said I, "you may; she has written nothing but truth; and to-morrow you shall doubt no longer."—"Whatever confidence I have in you," said she, "I can hardly believe you can make me such as you saw me in Salamanca. To accomplish that, you must have the power of the fairies. Look well at me: do not you find me frightful?"—"That you never can be," said I: "Nature has given you so many charms, that a whole century could not deprive you of them; but you certainly are not quite so killing as when you captivated all hearts in the university. However, madam, it is fortunate for you that I have the power, by a chemical composition, to recal that youthful air and those brilliant attractions which you possessed at that time."

In saying these words, I took out of my

pocket a little earthen pot and a phial; and, presenting them to her, said, "Behold the pomatum and the wash of the celebrated Potoschi, my master: you have only to rub your face and neck well, for a whole hour this evening, and you will tell me some news to-morrow morning." The Señora Dalfa received my composition with joy mingled with fear. Spite of all I could say to her, she could not divest herself of a secret distrust, which prevented her delivering herself up to the joy she hoped for. Nevertheless, she was so impatient to try the pomatum and wash, that she did not wait for night to shut herself up in her room; where she made her Abigail rub her for three or four hours; after which, having laid herself down, as I recommended, she had the utmost difficulty to fall asleep. Exhausted nature, however, soon gave way, and she fell into a refreshing sleep till day-break; when, suddenly starting up, she jumped out of bed, and, to satisfy her curiosity, ran to her glass. But who can describe her emotions? She did not know herself;

and thought she was transformed into another person. Then, calling her servant, "Beatrice," said she, "come quickly, and look at this beautiful maid." The Abigail, to lose no time, ran to her mistress almost naked, and, as she gazed upon her, exclaimed, "Gracious me! what do I see? Why, you have the face of a girl of fifteen! The Señor Gonzalez must be little better than a sorcerer to have made you so young again. I will run directly, and carry this news to the lady, your niece."—"Yes, Beatrice," said the Señora Dalfa, "go and announce this prodigy; she will be no less pleased than myself."

The servant ran and awakened Bernadina; "Do come and see," said she, in an ecstasy, "come and see the Señora, your aunt: by St. Apollina, she is not to be known; and is become as beautiful as a star." Bernadina was not slow in rising, and, dressing herself in haste, ran to the room of the Señora Dalfa, who was seated at her toilette; adding to the virtues of my com

position all the additions that the arts of a coquette could invent. "Ah, my aunt!" said she, starting back with surprise, "is it you I see before my eyes? How charming! I shall be almost jealous of your metamorphosis: I shall no longer divide with you the attentions of men."—"Do not laugh at me, niece," said the Señora Dalfa. "Seriously, how do you find me?"—"Quite ravishing," said Bernadina: "you have regained your infantine air: Gonzalez has taken from you fifteen good years, at least."

I arrived at the house during this part of the conversation; being myself impatient to observe the effect of my wash and pomatum. "Incomparable chemist!" said the aunt, on seeing me enter the room; "I am happy to see you, to thank you for the favour you have done me." At the same time, to show how sensible she was of the service I had done her, she gave me a closer embrace than she had ever done before: and her niece followed her example, saying, "My aunt thanks you for what you have

done for her ; and I thank you beforehand for what you are to do for me. Remember, you have promised me your secret.”—“I now renew the promise,” said I: “you shall soon be as skilful as myself in the art.” “But, Señor Gonzalez,” said the handsome widow, “you do not know the value of the treasure you possess: you ought to know that you might gain immense riches, by secretly selling your pomatum and wash. Leave us to find you customers; and we will furnish you with abundance. Since you possess such a wonderful talent, why should you bury it? Would it not be much better to sell it?”

“My aunt is right,” said Bernadina, “it would be much better to make a fortune by it, when it can be done so easily. That will put you, in a very short time, in a state to enable you to hold up your head. You only require two or three faces of quality, to give you a reputation; and so soon as you get into fashion, you will find it raining gold on you on all sides. Besides the old

women you will be overwhelmed with, you will have the superannuated coquettes, with their purses in their hands, to fee you to get rid of their wrinkles. In a word, you will quickly make a great fortune, which you will only be indebted to yourself for."

In short, these women said so much to me, that my avarice was kindled: I felt, all at once, an affection growing in me for riches: till then I had only loved them on account of their usefulness; but now I began to love them for themselves. I felt the charm that misers feel in their possessions. I believe, if I had been at that moment alone in my closet, I should have kissed my ducats, for their use and for their show. I determined, therefore, on following these women's advice. "It is done, Ladies," said I; "you have determined me; I will go immediately home, and make a great quantity of pomatum and wash, and you, in the mean time, must hunt out rich Dowagers who want it."—"Go go," said Bernadina, "leave us to do that; we shall

find them for you. The wish we have to be always handsome, makes us anxious that you should have some recompence."

I began by making a laboratory of my closet, and provided myself with phials and little pots. After which, I passed three days and three nights in distilling, with the alembic, the juice of plants proper for making my compound. At the end of this time, having finished my compositions, I went to my two ladies, to inform them I had enough to make twenty metamorphoses at least, and I only wanted practice. "You shall not want it any longer," said the aunt: "we have, already, two subjects to put into your hands. One is a Countess, who loves the world, whilst the world forsakes her; and the other is wife to an Alcayde of the Court, who is devoted to her husband, and only wishes to retain his affections. Go and see these two ladies," said she, giving me a paper on which their direction was written. "Ask to speak with their waiting-women, who have orders to take you privately into their mistresses' apartments."

I was so impatient to put the old women under contribution, that I went directly to the Countess; to whom the servant said, on introducing me, "My lady, this is the wonderful chemist, who repairs the havoc of time. "Alas!" said the Countess, sighing, "I am doubtful whether, notwithstanding all his science, he can give me a face that will not disgust men."—"My lady," replied I, with the tone of a mountebank, "permit me to say, you do not do yourself justice: you have not so much reason as you imagine to complain of time; it has only withered your tint, and faded your beauty. You have but to use the wash, to make it revive; and that is the principal use of it. I can also tell you what is most admirable—that it produces its effects between evening and morning: an old woman may go to bed with wrinkles, and rise with a face smoother than glass."—"Ah! what do you tell me?" interrupted the Countess with precipitation: "Can it be possible that you have so valuable a secret? Teach me, quickly, the manner of using it. In boasting of its virtues, you

make me impatient to try it." Upon which, having given her the proper instructions, I left her a little pot and phial, and I quitted her, saying, "that I would return the next morning, well assured I should find her changed from black to white."

On leaving the Countess, I took the way to the house of the Alcayde, whose devoted wife wished to become one of my practitioners. When I got there, I asked for an old Abigail, whose name was written in my paper. This servant soon appeared; and finding I had something to communicate to her mistress, she said to me, smiling, "I guess who you are; and be convinced that you are welcome: you are called for with might and main:" at the same time, she led me, by a private staircase, to the room of the lady, who was much pleased to see me. She was a person who had been very handsome in her first bloom, and she still preserved beauty enough for any reasonable husband to be contented with: upon which I said, on entering, "You cannot have sent for me,

madam, for yourself ; for if you have lost some of your charms, so many others remain, that you have no need of my secret to attach men to your triumphal car.”—

“ You are much deceived,” said she, “ if you think I wish to add to my beauty to gain adoration : it is solely to please my husband : my heart is devoted to him, and him only do I wish to have for an admirer. This may perhaps appear ridiculous to you ; but I tell you the truth. I love my husband, and have no other wish for beauty, than to be always pleasing to him, and keep him from attachments to others.”—

“ That is to say, madam,” said I, “ that you have a gallant husband.”—“ Too much so,” said she ; “ that is his fault : let us unite to correct it. Redouble, if it is possible, the virtue of your pomatum and wash ; in a word, render me so handsome and so attractive, that he never more will be tempted to ramble from his duty.”

I then showed the wife of the Alcayde in what manner she was to use the pomatum and wash ; and I took leave of her till the

next day, at the same hour. I had no sooner quitted this lady, than, more impatient than the Countess to see the effect of my composition, she did not wait for night, but rubbed herself directly, and went to bed, with orders not to be disturbed.

The following day, I arose, very anxious to know if my two practitioners had compliments or reproaches to make to me. I first went to the Countess, whom I found at her toilette, with her servant gazing at her with admiration, and praising her beauty to the skies. "Come here, good doctor," said she to me, with a joyful air; "come, and receive the applause you merit."—"I am delighted, my lady," said I, "that you are content with my composition."—"How—content!" replied the Countess; "say, rather, enchanted! I have already renounced acquaintance with young men and public places; but I may now appear in the world, and enter again into all the gaieties I have abandoned."—"Madam," said I, "that you may do

boldly : you cannot be too much in brilliant assemblies ; and I am sure the cavaliers of good taste will ogle you with pleasure.”——“ You are too flattering, Mr. Chemist,” said the lady to me ; “ but, however, when you speak in this way, you rather make the eulogium of your art, than my beauty. However it be,” said she, “ the service you have done me cannot be too much paid : here is a purse of fifty doubloons ; I will give you that solely for your little pot and phial ; and I shall set no bounds to my gratitude, if you keep me in the state in which you have put me.” After this conversation, the conclusion of which was highly gratifying to myself, I left the Countess, as much pleased with her as she was with me. Verily, I had never been so much honoured before ; and I began to think, from this hour, that the handsome widow and her niece had given me good advice.

Whilst I was in this train of fingering the money, I went, in the next place, to the wife of the Alcayde : she did not give

me a less gracious reception. This lady was just come from her toilette, and joy sparkled in her eyes. "Madam," said I, "approaching her, "you have such an air of satisfaction about you, that I augur well from it : appearances are very deceitful, if you are not highly pleased with my secret. Your beauty is as perfect as you can wish it to be."—"I am overwhelmed with happiness," said she : "your drugs have done wonders," smiling with the greatest satisfaction. "I must tell you what they have done. My husband came some time since into my room, with his usual cold and gloomy look : he hardly ever used to look at me ; or, if he did, it was with an indifference and carelessness that wounded my affection and my vanity. You shall hear what took place to-day. When he first looked at me, he remarked a change in my person, and this observation awakened his dormant affection. He said many sweet things to me, and gave me a thousand caresses." As the lady uttered these words, she looked so beautiful, that I longed to follow her husband's example:—but

doctors must be grave, and I adhered to my gravity.

When the wife of the Alcayde had expressed her satisfaction in the sweetest smiles, "Incomparable chemist!" said she to me, "you must not stop here; employ all the most efficacious powers of chemistry to preserve the charms you have given me. You have performed a miracle in rekindling an estranged husband; but you will perform a still greater, if you can render me sufficiently charming to fix his heart entirely; the possession of that is all I wish for. Let me but please him, and I am indifferent to all the world besides."—"Madam," said I, "the thing is not *easy*, but I do not think it *impossible*."—"Is it true?" cried she: "Ah, if you could accomplish this, I would well reward such a service." She pronounced these last words with an emotion that convinced me of their sincerity; and, in order to render them more energetic, she accompanied them with a handsome diamond ring, which she put on my finger; pro-

mising me other marks of gratitude. I could not but feel affected for this amiable and interesting woman. How much more estimable was she than the Countess ! *Her* ambition was to shine amongst fools and coxcombs, and lead a life of dissipation, when her time was come to learn from folly peaceably to part, and wean her from a world she loved too well. *This* affectionate wife was devoted to her husband ; he was all the world to her ; and, had he been so extraordinary a being as to love an ugly old woman, she would not have cared had she been as ugly as sin.

I went from this lady as well pleased with her as with the Countess ; for I did not doubt that my diamond was worth a hundred pistoles. To be more certain of it, I showed it to an old jeweller, who, after examining it some time, said, " Is this brilliant to be sold ? " — " No," I answered ; " the cavalier to whom it belongs only wishes to know its value. " — " If the cavalier is willing to sell it, I will give him a hundred and fifty pistoles for it," said he.

I thanked the jeweller, and, delighted with his valuation, I returned joyfully home; saying to myself, "Well done, Mr. Chemist, this is a very good morning's work: if you can get a few more such, you will soon grow rich."

I had no sooner returned to my hotel, than I shut myself up in my laboratory. I opened my strong box, that is to say, the trunk where I kept my property, and I put the Countess's purse into it; saying, with as tender an air as if I had been speaking to a mistress, "Dear shining pistoles! valuable and cherished recompence of my chemical labours! go and keep company with the ducats of my uncle: they are your elder brothers!" Seriously, if any body had heard my foolish discourse to my money, he would have taken me for a madman.

But I was overcome with the demon of avarice: I reckoned my pomatum and wash would, in a short time, raise my reputation, and produce me a great sum; so that I was

computing incessantly the amount in my avaricious imagination, without supposing I could be deceived in my calculations.

I went this very day to thank the Señora Dalfa and her niece, for giving me two such good customers. "We have got another ready for you," said Bernadina. "An old rich marchioness, whose face, by the lapse of time, is become frightful, expects the immediate arrival, in Madrid, of a young Italian Count, who is to marry her: they have never seen each other, but the marriage is decided on. The cavalier is informed that the lady is not handsome; but that will not prevent his marrying her, for she is rich. The lady, on her part, though she places great confidence in her riches, still fears, when the Count sees her, that he will be off his bargain. My aunt and I have spoken of you to her; and what we have said has made her very desirous of seeing you. Go, and wait upon her directly," said she to me, giving me a paper; "there is her direction, and the name of the Abigail you must speak to."

I ran to the Marchioness without losing time, and never was so surprised in my life as when I was conducted into her apartment. I saw, lying on a bed, a little black, blear-eyed, wrinkled woman; and I doubted at first if this could be the *darling* that a young Italian Count was coming with ardour from his own country to marry at Madrid. But she soon taught me enough to relieve my ignorance. "Mr. Doctor," said she, "pray look at me with attention; what do you think of my beauty? Do not you think that the cavalier, who comes so far to marry me, will be well paid for his trouble?" These words astonished me. I had never before heard a woman ridicule her own person. It is true, the Marchioness was more ugly than old, although she had sixty good years upon her head. I could willingly have joined in her pleasantry; but, besides being too polite to take such a liberty, she might, perhaps, have been displeased. "Madam," said I, "I certainly would not advise you, in your present state, to dispute the golden apple with the three goddesses; but, without

borrowing the power of the fairies, or the most powerful philters, you shall become, what the nobleman your husband will have reason to boast of—a very pleasing woman.”

The lady, at these words, burst out a laughing, and, still jesting at her own expense, said, “My good doctor, I believe you to be very clever, but not sufficiently so to make me pleasing in his eyes; I shall be more than contented with you, if you can render the sight of me supportable in society.”—“I will do more,” said I, with the confidence of a man who knows the ground on which he stands; “I will engage, that to-morrow morning, at your toilette, you shall become a Narcissus, in love with your own person.” The Marchioness laughed still more heartily to hear me speak in such a manner. “You are very rash,” said she, “to undertake that: I defy you, with all your chemical drugs, to accomplish it.” Nevertheless,” said she, “I will not refuse to try your secret: but I consent, in order to put you out of

conceit with it, rather than with the hope of becoming a good-looking woman : and I shall exact one condition from you—I expect you to give me your word of honour, that you will not tell any one that I was fool enough to put myself into your hands; and to flatter myself that you could make me handsome in spite of Nature.” I made her this promise ; and after giving her a phial and little pot, and recommending her to rub herself well, I retired.

I must own, I did tremble, in this instance, for my composition, notwithstanding all the happy proofs I had seen of its virtues. I feared it never could unshrive! such an object ; and I could not get rid of my uneasiness till my return to the Marchioness next day, whom I had the pleasure to find twenty years younger at least, and so beautiful, that I was in danger of following the example of Pygmalion, and falling in love with my own work. “ Doctor,” said she to me, transported with joy, “ I owe your honour some reparation ; I will own I looked upon you as a

mountebank, but am very agreeably deceived, and acknowledge you now for an unrivalled doctor."—"Madam," said I, in the same tone, "I will speak, with equal frankness to you; I will pardon your doubting my success, for I dared not flatter myself with a result so complete."

The old woman was in such an ecstasy at finding herself in a state to shine in brilliant circles, that she gave me a purse, in which were a hundred double pistoles, on condition that I would never let her want phials and little potts; and I promised to give her an ample provision of them. After this I left her, to go and lock up my hundred doubloons in the trunk; which already contained the purse of the Countess, and my ducats.

When I went next to Bernadina, she told me she had another subject for me, which was the old wife of a young doctor of law; "but," added she, "the old hag is so satisfied with her person, and imagines she is so idolized by her husband, that we have

had some difficulty in persuading her to try your composition ; but she consents to be beautified, as in public she passes for her husband's mother. There is her direction, and the name of her Abigail you are to ask for," giving me a paper. I lost no time in going to this beldam ; though I feared, as she was so satisfied with her person, and her husband's love, that she would not be very generous to me. When I was shown into the apartment of the doctor's wife, I found a little shrivelled, wizened old woman, dressed out like a girl. " Mr. Chemist," said she, " I have consented to let you attend me, though I have very little need of your composition : people will fancy one must grow old, and fade ; but I can assure you that I have the fondest of husbands. So wholly is he devoted to me, that he never thinks of any other woman, nor even wishes for any society but mine : he perfectly idolizes me. We have been married near twenty years : never was a happier couple, and never had woman a more devoted husband. I almost dread the idea of your adding to my

beauty ; for, if ~~my~~ husband has a fault, it is a slight tincture of jealousy. When young men get about me, he cannot help being a little jealous ; for I am lively, and, in young men's company, very animated. Therefore, take care you do not make me too handsome." What a contrast to my Marchioness ! thinks I : she shall have a good dose of flattery. " Madam," said I, starting with astonishment, " is it you I am to attend ? I thought it must be your mother, or your grandmother."—" There !" said she ; " all men think me so young and fascinating. Women will have it I look old. I could tell you such a story of my husband when we married"—giggling, with a look of wantonness. Thinks I, I must take care of my own virtue, or this amorous old hag will make love to me. " Madam," said I, " if you wish to try my composition, it must be to *prevent* the ravages of time, not to *repair* them."—" Why, yes," said she, " that is a prudent measure ; I have consented to send for you on that account : for I can assure you I am but just turned of seventy ; and what is that to Ninon de

l'Enclos?"—"Madam, said I, "I never was so puzzled with a subject before: I have had girls of eighteen, who have stood in need of my composition much more than you. I dread its making you so brilliant a beauty, that I shall have envy raised against me: and who does not know what baleful effects envy can produce?" said I, with a sigh. "Aye," she answered, "when the girls see me the only object of attention in public, that men have no eyes but for me, what effect may it not produce on my husband? I already think he is not fond of having me seen." The envious say, he is ashamed of me; but I know that it is jealousy, from his excessive attachment. It may embitter, for the first time, our matrimonial happiness!" heaving a deep sigh from her wrinkled bosom. "Madam," said I, heaving a sigh in return, equally deep, "Behold me, like the *Apothecary* in *Romeo and Juliet*,—"My poverty, and not my will, consents." Take this little pot, and this phial; rub yourself well, but do not make me answerable for the consequences." I bowed, and retired; and,

coming down stairs, I asked the Abigail what sort of man the husband was. "A gay young rake," said she; "and my mistress the greatest of fools and dupes. Her first husband was a doctor of law, and left her a widow, turned of fifty, with a good jointure. Every body thought her a broken-hearted widow, who would never think of another husband, and could not live above two or three years. Of course legacy-hunters came in abundance, and persuaded her no earthly being had half her charms or perfections: but she got in the way of this young rake, who was over head and ears in debt: she fell over head and ears in love, and they were soon married. He told her he married her from admiration of her person, and pretended to be very uxorious. She was ready to believe all he said. He games, and gets away from her as much as he can; but she is as jealous as a cat of him, and sticks to him like a horse-leech. They go on better than I thought they could do; but we did not intend her fortune should have gone in this way."

I thought this old girl the most amusing of my patients, and I hoped to have some more fun when I returned to her the next morning, which I did not fail to do ; but it was late before I reached her. When I entered the room, she turned briskly round, and spread out her hands: "Look," said she, "at the handsomest woman in Madrid. I am but just up. My husband is so fond of me, that he is always late in getting up. 'You little puss,' says he, smothering me with kisses, 'I never know how to leave you.' I am going to an assembly to-night, and shall have all eyes on me: the doctor's wife will outshine all the wives of the grandees. Our monarch is a little amorous: if he should hear of my excessive beauty, I cannot answer for the consequences." This old beldam was so lavish in her own praises, that she left me little to say; and, in truth, I never saw my composition have so little effect: she was such a skeleton, without one good feature, and had so bad a coloured skin, that there was nothing to work upon. However, as she thought herself a brilliant

of the first water, it was quite enough. My doctor's wife now judged it time to draw out her purse. "Mr. Chemist," said she, "such a little pot and phial cannot cost much; and I had so little want of any thing of the kind, I shall not think it necessary to make you a great compliment: here are two pistoles for your trouble." I bowed, and retired. "Curse the old cat!" I muttered, as I went down stairs. The Abigail said, "Aye, nobody gets much from her now; the husband gets the sweepstakes. I used to have plenty of good clothes from her; but she wears them now to the last thread. I never have had a comfortable night's rest since she married. I used to lay in bed as long as I pleased: now I am obliged to be up early; and, if it was not for some perquisites from my master, I should not stay."

My two pistoles did not add much to my wealth; but they went into the strong box, next the Marchioness's purse. "Give me an old woman," said I, "with sense to see

her own person, and reward the professor of eternal youth!" The more a dropsical person drinks, the more he would drink; and the more riches a miser heaps, the more he would heap. The Señora Dalfa, and her niece, made me gain a great deal, in the hope that I should, at last, teach them the composition of my pomatum and wash, which I had promised them; and I was still in the mind to keep my promise, when a reverse of fortune came, like a thunder-clap, upon me, and prevented it. I will relate the circumstances.

One morning, whilst I was arranging my business, I was much surprised to see a sort of alguazil enter my room. I asked him what he wanted. "You," he replied, making me look at a gold medal that he wore between his skin and shirt, upon which were engraven the formidable arms of the Inquisition. "I have the honour to be a serjeant of the Holy Office, and I have the orders of my superiors to arrest you. Follow me: I will conduct you to our

prisons." I was so confused at these words, that, not knowing what I did, I attempted to beat off the serjeant, and to struggle with him; but he only laughed at me, saying, "Señor Cavalier, you take the wrong side. You are, apparently, ignorant of the respect due to the Holy Inquisition. All persons whom they arrest, of whatever condition or quality, allow themselves to be taken prisoners without resistance; and if any (which is very rare) from ignorance or wilfulness, make resistance, all people are obliged to give assistance, to execute the orders of the Grand Inquisitor. Come then," said he, "quietly with me, unless you prefer being indignantly dragged by force." Seeing it would answer no purpose to disobey, I followed the serjeant, who led me straight to the prisons of the Holy Office.

As soon as I was arrived there, the jailer, accompanied by many guards, shut me up in a dungeon, saying to me, "The Commissary of the Holy Inquisition will come to you in a moment: prepare yourself to

make sincere and positive answers to his questions." At these words he retired, leaving me overwhelmed with stupor; from which I was scarcely recovered, when the Commissary appeared. He first asked me my name and my profession; after which, he exhorted me, for my own interest, to make a faithful declaration of all my goods; saying, to encourage me, if I was innocent, as they believed, all the effects I acknowledged should be exactly returned to me; whereas, if I concealed the least thing from their knowledge, all my goods, moveable and immoveable, would be confiscated. "You cannot doubt," said this honest man, "the integrity of the Holy Office; and, if you are not guilty, be well assured they shall be faithfully returned to your hands."

I was the dupe of this perfidious promise; and, supposing I had only saints to deal with, I was simple enough to acknowledge what I had in my lodgings; the amount of the money in my trunk, and in what coins. Upon which, the Commissary, eager to seize

went directly to the hotel, with an order from the Holy Office to the host, to open my room, and give, without resistance, my trunk, with all my treasure, which I have never seen since. Whilst the Commissary executed this commission, I was in my dungeon, stretched on the stump bed, and quite stunned with my imprisonment; of which I in vain tried to find the cause. "What crime can I have committed," said I, "to have drawn on me this disgrace?" My conscience did not reproach me with any thing of which the Holy Office had cognizance: they must, certainly, have mistaken their person. Not knowing where this might end, I gave myself by degrees to chagrin, and from chagrin to despair. I bemoaned my fate, and made the dungeon resound with my lamentations. The noise I made in bewailing my sad lot brought one of the guards, who watch unceasingly over the prisoners, and who are night and day in the galleries. Opening my door, he came to me, and gave me five or six strokes with a switch, very smartly; saying to me, in a low

voice, " Hold your tongue, friend ; know, that in the holy prison, where you are, a profound silence is kept : you are not permitted to despond ; it is even forbidden to complain—and, above all, of the *justice* of the Holy Inquisition, which, incapable of committing the least injustice, is ever offended at the complaints of the unhappy who dare to murmur at its rigour. This I warn you of, once for all ; for if you make any more noise, I shall treat you much more roughly than I have done now. Let this remain engraven in your memory." At these words, which he pronounced with cold indifference, he went out, and left me to make my reflections.

All that I could now do was to arm myself with patience, and make a virtue of necessity ; and what comforted me at last in my affliction was, that I thought it to be the will of Heaven, punishing me for my past faults. I at length became resigned. " González," said I to myself, " instead of complaining, make a holy use of your afflic-

tion : reflect that the Lord will reprove you a second time. . Remember the risk you ran in the prison of Avila. What prevented the Corregidor from treating you like the rogues you were with ? Heaven delivered you from that danger ; and you ought to hope that it will not abandon you in this. You have to do with enlightened judges, holy people, who are perpetually setting at liberty, and who will return you your money, 'to the last maravedi.'

In this hope I ardently waited for my examination, which took place the third day of my confinement ; when the jailer came with a guard, to take me from my dungeon to the audience-chamber of the Grand Inquisitor. I found this judge in a large room hung with green taffety, at the end of which was a large crucifix of white marble, embossed, reaching up to the ceiling. The Grand Inquisitor, who was of the order of St. Dominic, was seated in an arm-chair, at the end of a long table, and looked excessively haughty : his Secretary,

who was a little priest, blacker than a mole, sat at the other end, on a low stool.

As soon as I saw this formidable Minos, I ran and threw myself at his feet, hoping by this action to soften him, and move him with compassion. Useless humiliation! He ordered me to rise: after which, he asked me for what cause I was arrested. I replied, that I was ignorant of it; and that I humbly supplicated his most illustrious Reverence to have the goodness to let me know what it was. "My friend," replied the Inquisitor, full of sweetness, "that is not the way here: you are not in secular jurisdiction. It is for you to declare why you are put in our prisons, and I exhort you to make the confession, as it is the only means by which you can recover your liberty." At these words, which caused extreme surprise in me, I threw myself a second time at the feet of my judge, and, weeping bitterly, "How," cried I, "holy father, can I tell you a thing, of which I know nothing at all?"—"Useless words," said the Monk,

quite unmoved. "Accuse yourself directly, or else hold your tongue." I would still speak, and represent the impossibility of what he exacted; but the Grand Inquisitor inflexibly persisted in my accusing myself; and, at last, he was so angry at my obstinacy, that he insisted on my silence, and rang a silver bell, which was placed before him on the table. Then I saw brought into the hall (a sight that I could not behold without great mortification) my trunk and my clothes, carried by two guards, preceded by the Commissary who had seized them. At the sight of my dear spoils, torrents of tears ran from my eyes, that I could not restrain, as I had a sad foreboding I should lose them for ever. In the mean time, the Inquisitor, after having made them open my trunk in my presence, and taken an inventory of its contents, assured me it should be returned to me as it was, when I went out of the Inquisition. These gentlemen were not contented with that; they searched me, and took away every thing from my person, even my pocket-handkerchief.

You may readily suppose they did not leave me the ring of the Alcayde's wife; they snatched it off my finger. After which, the Inquisitor exhorted me not to delay, for any length of time, to declare the cause of my imprisonment. They then retired with my effects, followed by the little black priest and the Commissary: and when they were gone out of the hall, the jailer and the guard took me back to my dungeon; where I passed the rest of the day without eating or drinking, and all the night following without sleep. I recalled to my mind the declaration that the Grand Inquisitor required me to make; and the more I thought of it, the more absurd I found it.

At the end of three days I was again brought before the judge, who said to me, "Well, will you declare to us to-day the cause of your imprisonment?"—"How, your Reverence, is it possible I can divine it?" I answered. "Do not you see, my father, you demand a thing impossible? I do not know who denounced me to the Holy Office; and I must be ignorant for ever, if

you will not tell me. If I have accusers, why not confront me with them? It is the shortest and most certain means of knowing whether I am innocent or guilty." The Inquisitor, shaking his head, replied thus to me: "My friend, I see plainly you have no wish to go soon out of our prisons: we have seven witnesses against you, good citizens, all men of honour and probity: you know, without doubt, what they have told us, in informing against you: govern yourself by that; confess honestly that you are guilty of the crime they impute to you: it is only by this avowal that you can prevent the rigorous sentence which the Holy Office pronounces against prisoners who obstinately deny the crimes of which they are accused." After saying this, the judge went out of the hall, with the Secretary and the Commissary; and I returned to my dungeon, more discontented with this second audience than with my first.

I must tell what I am accused of! Well, of what? Why, of the crime that my accusers depose I have committed. But what

is this crime? That is what confounds me. It is not that, in scrupulously examining my conscience, I cannot find subjects of reproach: the doubloons of the dropsical patient at Murcia, and those of the licentiate Salablanca, occurred, to trouble my mind; and I was simple enough to suppose that it might be for these facts that I was arrested: nevertheless, after reflecting on the nature of the crimes that the Holy Office had a right to inquire into, I felt assured it could not be on that account. All that troubled me was to know who were my accusers, and the crime of which I was accused; which I at last learnt in my third audience, as I will relate.

The Grand Inquisitor asked me, as at first, in the two preceding audiences, if I was still ignorant of the subject of my detention; and, upon the answer I made, that I had not yet been able to guess it, the secretary opened a register that was before him, and in which were written the depositions made against me. "They shall read to you," said the Inquisitor, "all the heads of the

accusations made against you : hear them attentively ; and you will find the Holy Office, always slow to punish, is well informed of the conduct of the guilty, before they arrest them." He had no sooner finished these words, than the secretary read informations made against me by the accusers, who agreed together in accusing me of sorcery ; all declaring that a certain person, named Gonzalez, a pretended chemist, undertook, without the permission of the Corregidor, to sell secretly to the ladies a certain pomatum and a certain wash, which, by the aid and co-operation of the devil, made the oldest, and ugliest, and most decrepit old women, young again.

On hearing this accusation, I could not refrain from bursting out a laughing ; which, in this place, and under existing circumstances, was certainly very ill-timed. The secretary, indignant at the irreverence, immediately left off reading ; and the Inquisitor, looking askew at me, said, " Abominable shame ! to laugh in this place ! " These words brought me to my senses ; and, falling

on my knees before the judge, I most humbly asked pardon for this want of respect; but I could not help the laugh which had so indiscreetly escaped me, at hearing the deposition. "What is there ridiculous in it?" said he gravely; "do you not know that it is very serious?"—"Why, no, Mr. Inquisitor," said I, with a little vivacity; "permit me to show your Reverence that this accusation is very frivolous. It is very true, I possess the talent of composing a certain pomatum, and a wash, which preserve the tint, and embellish the face; but herein there is nothing but what is natural, and the devil has no part in it." "That is what we are not convinced of," said the judge; "it is said you have made a handsome person of a young ugly girl, and you restore to old women the charms they have lost. They say, in short, that you are rather a sorcerer than a chemist." "O Heavens!" cried I, "what accusations are raised against me! I am tempted to believe they are only apothecaries or perfumers, whom envy arms against a man who possesses secrets they do not." I remarked,

whilst I was speaking, that the Grand Inquisitor, although well accustomed to dissemble, let me read in his looks that I had guessed my accusers, and convinced him of my innocence. But, for the honour of the Holy Office, he took good care not to make such an avowal; because, in owning this, he would have been obliged to set me at liberty as an innocent person, falsely accused, and to restore my effects on discharging me. For this cause, abruptly breaking off the accusation, "We must investigate this," said he; "the matter is delicate. If there is no magic in your composition, it is just you should be immediately restored to liberty."

This was my third audience; from which I returned into my dungeon with as much gaiety as if Mr. Inquisitor had acquitted me of all which my accusers imputed to me. However, my joy was not of long duration; for my judge, having made me come before him eight days after, said to me, "Your affairs go ill; your accusers have made recent depositions against you: they maintain that you deserve to be burnt as an

enchanter: they say you make the most strange metamorphoses; and cite, amongst others, your transformations of women; which are proofs of a diabolical art being used. They mention a certain Marchioness, who, till within a short time, was a wrinkled, blear-eyed, decrepit old hag; and you may now take her for a girl under twenty. That was not, as you shall see, in the first charge against you. Chemists do not perform such prodigies; and one has good reason to believe that the devil must have some share in them. I will even tell you, there are two witnesses who depose to having heard you exorcise evil spirits in making your composition." "Ah, the rascals!" cried I, at these last words; "who can have been so wicked as to invent such falsehoods? What shall I do to these wretches for daring to calumniate me thus? May thunder fall" . . . "No imprecations," interrupted the Inquisitor; "no invectives: return to your room, and remain there tranquilly till it is decided whether you are a sorcerer or a chemist."

These last words of the Grand Inquisitor

did not appear very consolatory to me. "Living God!" said I, on returning to my cell, "what will be the end of all this? My judges, from ignorance, or perhaps worse motives, will find in my pomatums smells of brimstone; and, behold, Mr. Chemist is abandoned to the flames! How the devil shall I get out of this scrape? Spite of my innocence, I shall be burnt at the first *auto-da-fé*." This reflection made me very sorrowful; and I fell into so black a melancholy, that I should probably have gone mad, if Heaven had not preserved me, by sending me, next day, a consolation that I had neither thought of nor hoped for.

One of my guards, who commonly brought me my food, coming into my cell, began, contrary to his custom, to speak to me. "Señor Prisoner," said he, quite in a low voice, "is not your name Estevanille Gonzalez?" "Yes, my friend," said I; "that is my name." "Enough," said he; "I will acquit myself of a commission I am charged with, though I run great risk in meddling in your affairs. Know that two ladies are

at work to serve you, and are moving Heaven and earth to get you out of the claws of the Inquisition. They have already got into your interest some great lords, who have promised to intercede for you; and I am to assure you that the interest of your intercessors is such, you have every reason to hope you will soon get out." This news was a sweet consolation to me in my affliction. "My friend," said I to the guard, "it is very mortifying to me that I can only by words acknowledge the favour you have done me; for the Holy Office has deprived me of the means" "I know it well," interrupted he with haste; "they have left you nothing they could take from you: I expect nothing from you but simple thanks. If I deserve any thing more, the ladies, who interest themselves so much for you, will take care to recompense your obligations."

"Ah! who are these charitable ladies," said I to the guard, "who attempt the enterprise of my deliverance?" "Pardon me, Señor Gonzalez, if I do not satisfy your curiosity on that head," said he; "they

have expressly forbid me to name them : but they have, at the same time, ordered me to assure you, they will spare nothing to get you out of the Inquisition." After saying this, he went quickly out, for fear of being suspected if he staid longer in my cell. When he was gone out, I said to myself, " I wish, however, the guard had let me know the names of these ladies, whom I suspect to be the Countess and the wife of the Alcayde, or the Marchioness. These people, apparently informed of my misfortunes by my renown, would get me out of prison from gratitude. Do not I deceive myself? Perhaps these generous women, who take so much pains in my favour, are more likely to be the Señora Dalfa^a and her niece." I dwelt on this idea. " It is certainly them : I no longer doubt it: the report of my imprisonment has doubtless reached the ears of these ladies ; and Bernadina has entreated the Count of Medellin to use his interest for me. Another thing confirms this opinion ; which is, that, not knowing the secret I have promised to

communicate to them, the fear of losing it induces them to be so warmly interested for my liberty."

It was, in fact, these two women who had gained over the guard to their interest: he owned it to me the next day. "It is true, Señor Gonzalez," he said to me, "that it is to Donna Bernadina, and the Señora Dalfa her aunt, that you are indebted for the little service I have rendered you: they engaged me to speak to you, to let you know that, being informed you were in the prisons of the Holy Office, they have found protectors for you. The Count of Medellin and the Prior of Castile, at their request, have beset the Grand Inquisitor, whose intimate friends they are; and I think they will get you set at liberty. It will not be a matter without difficulty; for the Judge has told these noblemen that you are accused of sorcery; and you know the Inquisitors have no mercy on this head: however, you may hope every thing from two friends of such consequence."

This intelligence of the guard gave me a new cause of uneasiness: "If Mr. Inquisitor," said I, "is determined I shall be found guilty, he will pay no regard to these noblemen; who, on their side, angry at having in vain asked my liberty of him, will quarrel with him; and I shall be the victim of their quarrel." And, in reality, it was near being the case. The next evening, the guard, bringing in my supper, said to me, "I have seen the ladies that you know, and they have told me to tell you, from them, that the Count of Medellin and the Commander of Castile are so little satisfied with the Grand Inquisitor, that they have applied to the Count Olivares, the Prime Minister, and have entreated him to interfere in this shameful business, and snatch an innocent person from the flames. They have related to him the facts of the metamorphoses which your pomatum has made; and his Excellency, after a hearty laugh, has promised not to give you up to the fury of the Holy Inquisition. This is what the ladies have charged me to tell you; and in

a few days I will inform you what the Count Olivares has done for you."

This account comforted me a little. I knew that the Count, rather King than Minister, could do any thing; and I was persuaded that, at his request, the Grand Inquisitor would willingly release me. The Prime Minister going, according to custom, to the King's levee, met the Grand Inquisitor in the antechamber. He went up to him with a smile, and took him aside: "Mr. Inquisitor," said he, "I have a petition to make to your Reverence."—"A petition!" said the monk, casting down his eyes with humility: "command me." "You have in your prisons," said the Count, "a certain chemist, called Gonzalez; you will oblige me by setting him at liberty."—"Although there are strong proofs he deals in magic," said the Inquisitor, "I can refuse nothing to your Excellency: to-morrow he shall be free. But," added he, "have the goodness, if you please, to permit that his discharge shall be in such a manner as not to dis-

honour the Holy Office.”—“ It is only on that condition I ask it,” said the Minister ; “ God forbid I should do the least injury to the authority of your tribunal ! I shall be satisfied, provided this prisoner comes safe and sound out of your prisons.”

The Inquisitor promised him this ; and exactly kept his word : but he first made me go through the usual formalities that the Holy Office scrupulously performs ; and these I shall now relate, as I no longer fear its power.

The morning after the Prime Minister had spoken to the Grand Inquisitor, I was conducted into a hall, where the latter waited to give me my audience of leave. “ Gonzalez,” said he, “ your process is finished, and you will go out of prison presently. But it is necessary, first, in order to conform to our customs, that you confess you are guilty.”—“ Guilty !” interrupted I, hastily ; “ I will never own that.”—“ Hear me with attention,” interrupted the monk, in his turn : “ dō not make a bad affair of a good one.

As the Holy Inquisition never arrests a person unjustly, when they would release a prisoner, they exact from him, even if he be innocent, a confession of his guilt, that they may appear to show favour to him as a criminal." I was stunned with this metaphysical reasoning. "I will own all that you wish, Mr. Inquisitor," said I. Whereupon he observed, that there was only one thing remaining for me to do, to obtain the *mercy* of the Holy Office. At the same time opening a missal, which was on the table, he made me put my hand on it, and said to me, "Promise and swear you will observe eternal silence, as to all you have seen in the Inquisition, during your residence here,—that you will never speak of this tribunal, or of its ministers, but with profound respect. Be assured, that, if any raillery should ~~chance to escape you against~~ the Holy Inquisition, you will repent it. In whatever city, village, or part of Spain, you may be, there are every-where officers, who ~~watch incessantly over its interests, and who~~ arrest, without distinction, all persons who presume to speak of it with irreverence.

Therefore, take good care, my friend," said the monk; "for if, by misfortune, it should happen that you fall again into our hands, you will be punished as a relapsed heretic, and consequently burnt; and not even the powerful protector, to whom you this day owe your liberty, will be able to save you. Take, then, the oath I require of you; and retire afterwards where you please."—"But, my Right Reverend Father," said I, "have the goodness, if you please, to restore me my trunk and my clothes."—"Ah! my child," said his Reverence, as if he felt compassion for my misfortune, "I pity you: this is all I can do for you. As soon as an accused person enters the Holy Office, if he is suspected of magic, from that moment all his effects are confiscated to the King: that is the rule. It is unfortunate for you; but it must be some consolation to you to reflect, that many prisoners would be glad to get off as you do, with the loss only of all their property."

This discourse proved to me plainly, that

Mr. the Grand Inquisitor had no mind to release my trunk, which he had safely locked up ; and I submitted with a good grace to this confiscation. So, after having sworn upon the missal that I would never speak any thing but good of the gentlemen officers of the Holy Inquisition, I departed from their prisons almost naked ; the guards of this hell upon earth having taken from me, as their part of the spoil, a good coat which I had on my back, and bestowed on me, in return, an old black one, without sleeves. I must also observe, that there were painted on this dress representations of flames, which showed it to be the remains of a garment of one who had been burnt.

I was so much ashamed to be seen in this miserable state, that I took refuge in the first church I came to ; where, thank Heaven ! there was no one to see me. I hid myself behind a tomb, and there waited for night, which soon came to my aid. As soon as it was dark, I went to my liberators, who did not even know me when

first I presented myself before them : my appearance even alarmed them ; but, when they found out who I was, they began to laugh like two fools, to see me thus attired. “Ladies!” said I, “the uniform of the prisoners of the Holy Office seems to please you.”—“Yes, truly,” said Bernadina, who was a great giggler, “we are both of us delighted with your waistcoat ; it gives you quite a gallant air ; but it is a pity that they have made you smell of the *auto-da-fé*.”—“This,” said I, “is a present which the guards of the Inquisition have made me, in exchange for a good coat, which they have taken off my back.”

The women, after they had enjoyed their laugh, became serious, and told me how uneasy they had been at my imprisonment : “And we have suffered the more, from being, in fact, the cause of it; for we were the first to advise you to sell your pomatum and wash.”—“Ladies!” said I, “if you have innocently thrown me into this frightful danger, you have, in return, happily got me out of it. It has cost me, it is true, all the

wealth I possessed; but, happily, I am accustomed to reverses of fortune."

"We heartily wish," said the aunt, "that my niece and I were well enough off to offer you more than you have lost; but, however small our means are, we are able to put you in the same state as you were, before you got acquainted with the Grand Inquisitor." When the Señora Dalfa said this, she only supposed I had lost the money given me by the ladies I had embellished; for I had not said one word to her, any more than her niece, of the ducats left me by my uncle. "Madam," said I, "it is carrying generosity too far, and I should only abuse it, if I accepted—" "For shame, Gonzalez!" interrupted Bernadina hastily, which showed the generosity of her heart; "Do you mean to make compliments with your friends? You shall live with us: you shall have a small room here, where you will not be badly off; and we offer you our table and our purse."

I accepted this offer, which was made too

kindly to be refused: besides, it did not become a man, who had no other property than the garment of a miserable wretch who had been burnt, to refuse such assistance. I became then comptroller of these ladies, with whom I supped, clothed as I was. My burlesque attire, instead of hurting their feelings, made them laugh heartily from time to time; and occasioned so much pleasantry, that it made the repast quite charming. They did not spare the Holy Office; and even I, forgetting the oath I had taken on the missal, took my turn in making some pleasant observations on the formalities of this tribunal. But what, above all, diverted my hostesses, was, that after having taken Mr. the Grand Inquisitor to pieces, and lashed him well, I stopped myself quite short, and, calling silence: "Peace, Gonzalez!" said I to myself, "hold your tongue; remember you are to speak nothing but good of these gentlemen, whatever cause you may have to complain of them, and look upon them as so many Barbary corsairs."

I was in such high spirits during supper, that it might be supposed the loss of my dear invaluable trunk was quite indifferent to me. However, it always stuck close to my heart, and I never thought of it without wishing at the devil all the Inquisitions in the world. When we had well enjoyed our laugh, we each retired to our rooms. I found in mine a good bed, instead of the wretched one in my cell ; and the furniture was of corresponding excellence. Every thing in this room did credit to the taste of the Count of Medellin. After looking around me with satisfaction, I undressed myself, which was soon done, and instantly lay down, in the hope of a good night's rest ; but, contrary to my expectation, and as if the bed was not made for sleeping on, Morpheus refused his aid till day-break, when I fell into a profound sleep.

About nine in the morning, my chamber-door opened ; and I saw the Señora Dalfa enter, followed by three men, two of whom had bundles of clothes. " Señor Gonzalez,"

said this lady to me, " I have brought you here the best broker in Madrid, with several suits of clothes ; and I will leave you to try them on." Thus saying, she retired, and left me with the broker and his men, who, without losing time, opened their parcels, and showed me five or six suits, each one better than the other. There was one in particular that pleased me, and I chose that, less for its magnificence, rich as it was, than because it seemed exactly made for me, it so well suited my person. The broker furnished me with that suit, a sword, beaver hat, silk stockings, shoes, Holland shirts ; and all this by the order and at the expense of my handsome hostesses, who likewise added a purse of fifty doubloons, which they forced me to accept, in spite of all I could do to resist their generosity. I told them, that, satisfied with their table, and the lodging I had with them, I only wished to remain there, and depend on my own industry to support myself. " Why, truly," said Bernadina, " it only rests with yourself to gain twenty times more than you have

lost : you have only to continue the selling your pomatum and wash."—"That is what I shall carefully guard against," exclaimed I : "the envious people who have denounced me to the Holy Office will not fail to throw me again into its clutches as a sorcerer."

"Your fear is just," said the aunt ; "renounce that trade : we will carry it on for you. My niece and I can do it with so much secrecy, that we shall have no apprehension. Teach us to make your pomatum and wash ; and, without your meddling in it, you shall have a third of the profit." I did not hesitate to enter into so advantageous a convention with them, and, without loss of time, I instructed them in the drugs which formed the composition of my pomatum and wash ; and I taught them how to mix them up, which they learnt with great facility ; so much had they the thing at heart.

I employed myself for five or six days in instructing them, without ever going out of the house ; and, when I had accomplished it, they told me that henceforward I might

leave all to them. "It is now our business," said the Señora Dalfa, "to labour for the good of our little society."—"We will take the whole management ourselves," said the niece; "and we will sell the merchandise, without your appearing in it; giving you a faithful account of our profit. In the mean time, you may amuse yourself in the pleasantest way you possibly can. Visit your friends; go with them to play the gallant in the meadows of St. Jerome; and to the play, to hiss the new pieces. Divert yourself as much as you can; I will even say you shall not be constrained to live here. If you like better to live in your hotel, you have only to return there." "Ladies!" said I, "let us speak the honest truth to each other: it seems to me more proper that we should have separate homes, and not appear to have any connexion with each other: I will come to you, from time to time, when it is dark, in the evening. With this precaution we shall deceive the vigilance and the spite of my enemies, who will, without doubt, watch me; and we shall sell our merchandise without hazard." My

associates approved of this advice, and we agreed that it was best to separate. They should have the trouble of embellishing faces which had become the worse for wear ; and I should reap the fruit of it, without running any hazard.

I took the road, therefore, to my former lodging (I should say, *hotel*), and inquired for the landlord, who imagined, on seeing me, that it was my ghost. "Is it you, Señor Gonzalez?" exclaimed he, in the greatest astonishment ; "is it really you, in substance?"—"It is I, myself, my dear Andresillo," said I, embracing him : "you did not expect so quick a return, did you?" "No, on my faith !" said he ; "the Holy Inquisition, which I take to be the worst of the three wicked Saints we have any knowledge of, in Spain does not easily let its prey escape. I must confess, that I thought you lost."—"And why so?" said I : "the judges of the Holy Office are both *just* and *enlightened* : they have acknowledged my innocence, and have set me at liberty."—"Yes ; but," said he, "have they restored

your property? *That* is the thing.”—“Hold your tongue, my friend,” said I, putting my fore-finger on my mouth; “do not; I entreat you, ask questions which may induce me to break a silence that I must observe all my life. It is not that I fear opening my heart to you; I have no distrust of you.”—“Oh! as to that,” said he, “you may do it without fear to me; I am prudent, and, what is more, I am your friend: besides, whatever evil you may tell me of these gentlemen, it will not equal what I think of them. I have known,” said he (for the Señor Andresillo was somewhat of a talker), I have known a very honest man, who was kept there three years, and knew not why. As he always maintained that he was innocent, he was condemned to the flames; but, on the eve of the *auto-da-fé*, subdued by the preparations for his punishment, he owned himself guilty, against the testimony of his conscience, to save his life. That, however, did not prevent the confiscation of all his property; and they sent him to the galleys for five years.” My host was too

much in a humour to speak against the Holy Office for me to remain with him, or he would have told me five or six other stories in *praise* of this tribunal. I was obliged to interrupt him, and asked, "if he knew what was become of my footman?" "Of that I am ignorant," said he; "I only know, that, alarmed at your detention, he took to flight; and, to fly the faster, he took your mule. In that respect, however, he only got the start of the Inquisition; for scarcely had he disappeared, when one of their familiar spirits came to me, big with expectation, to demand your mule. You see by this they have a good scent, and let nothing escape them: I am surprised even that they have let you come out of prison with such good clothes as you have got on; they do not commonly deal so honestly with their prisoners."—"My friend," said I to the host, "I have bought this habit since I came out; I had one equally good when I was arrested; but the guards of the Holy Office appropriated that to themselves, before they liberated me." At these words, Andresillo laughed for a

quarter of an hour ; but, for my part, who did not find it so good a joke, I wished to talk of other things : for, although the Holy Inquisition might hear nothing of the subject of our conversation, I was anxious to keep well with that Saint. “ I am come to lodge again with you,” said I : “ Is my room empty ? ” — “ Yes,” said the host ; “ and you will find it as you left it.” — “ Do many people come to sup with you ? ” said I. “ More than ever,” said Andresillo ; “ you will see some new faces.” — “ That is what I like,” said I ; “ I love a table with variety at it.” In fact, this very evening I supped with many cavaliers who were unknown to me, and with one I knew very well, but whom I did not recollect at first : it was Seignor Ferrari, the Italian gentleman that I accompanied, out of friendship, from Leghorn to Pisa, and with whom I remained some time, and left at last, when I found I was one too many in his house. Ferrari was struck with my face, as I had been with his ; and coming to me, after supper, with open arms, “ Señor Gonzalez,” said he, “ thank Heaven I embrace

you once again, after so long a separation." I returned his embraces, and a thousand compliments passed between us. Afterwards, changing the subject, he said, "I have many things to say to you; but we are not in a place for private conversation: will you meet me to-morrow morning, at nine, on the Prado?"—"You shall find me there, as you wish," said I: "I have no less inclination than yourself to have some private conversation." Upon this we parted; he to go to his lodging in the neighbourhood, and I to my own apartment.

The next morning, notwithstanding my eagerness to be on the Prado, I was not there first: Ferrari was waiting for me; and, after fresh embraces, the Italian began as follows:—"Señor Gonzalez," said he, "I know well why you disappeared all at once from amongst us at Pisa: Engracia disclosed the circumstance to me on her death-bed."—"How!" interrupted I, with as much surprise as haste; "you have lost your wife!"—"It is two years since she died in her lying-in of a daughter, who

soon followed her. ‘ Dear husband !’ said she to me, embracing me for the last time, ‘ amongst other things I have to request you to pardon is, the having made you believe that your friend Gonzalez attempted to seduce me. It is false : never did his affection for you alter : but I had recourse to this lie, to get rid of a man who possessed your confidence. Jealous of the perfect friendship that united you to each other, I wished to break up the connexion. I repent having done this injustice ; and if, by accident, you should ever meet with him, I charge you to ask pardon of him for me.’ ”

“ Oh ! I pardon her from my heart,” said I, smiling ; “ such a trait of jealousy is excusable in a wife : I am only sorry she made me lose your friendship for a time.” “ It is true,” said Ferrari, “ that, upon the false report my wife made me of your perfidy, I felt violently irritated against you ; but, as soon as she undeceived me, I deplored our separation with tears, and I have lamented it ever since. Think, there-

fore, how happy I am to see you again." "I was not ignorant of it," said I: "for, two months after I left Pisa, I met at Florence with Spinetta, the waiting-woman of your wife. This girl told me she had left the service of Engracia; and at the same time related the trick she had put upon you, to estrange you from me. But once more I pardon her. She is enough punished, as she no longer lives." I afterwards asked Ferrari the state of his affairs; if he was a widower, or married again?

"Married again!" said he, indignantly; "Heaven forbid! Success to widowers! say I; long may they flourish. When my wife died, I swore never to have another; and, thanks to Heaven! I have never felt tempted to break my vow."—"You astonish me!" said I: "Why do you say so? What makes you revolt against matrimony? Do you believe the loss of Engracia irreparable?"—"No," replied he: "I know very well, that, if I wished for a second wife, I could find, without difficulty, a lady quite as amiable as Engracia:

but, between ourselves, in the married state a husband has so many duties to perform, that it does not suit a man who loves his liberty. I loved my wife, and I was beloved by her : however, I found something wanting to make me happy ; and, now I am a widower, I enjoy perfect happiness. It is true, I am rather prone to live freely with my friends, and enjoy myself with them—rather than to attach myself to a woman who makes me her slave, in expecting me to devote all my time to her pleasures. Perhaps you think differently from me ; perhaps I am now speaking to a man who is actually in the chains of marriage, and wedded to a woman he idolizes.” —“ No, God be praised !” said I, “ I am still a bachelor. I took a fancy once I would marry, but my happy stars kept me from committing such a folly. Since that time, I have never been tempted to quit a single life.” Ferrari seemed much pleased to hear me talk in this strain : “ I am charmed,” said he, “ to find sentiments in you so conformable to mine. Nothing is wanting to me now but that we should live together. Will you

again unite your destiny to mine? : Come and live with me at a handsome house I have at the gates of Burgos, which my aunt, who lived at Mont-Real, and is now dead, left me. It is nearly fifteen months since I took possession, and I live entirely there : I have given up Pisa and Italy, to live in Spain, where I pass my time very pleasantly with three or four friends of my own disposition ; and my happiness will be perfect if I can engage you to partake in our pleasure."

I should not have accepted the offer made me by Ferrari, if I had still possessed my dear strong box ; but, in the state to which the Holy Office had reduced me, I looked upon the offer of Ferrari as an advantage I ought not to refuse : besides, after my misfortune, I was not sorry to quit Madrid—at least for a time. I therefore promised the Italian to go to Burgos, and live with him. " All that I fear," said I to my friend, " is, that you will again take a fancy to marry, and that your second wife will be equally fatal to our friendship as the

first.”—“ Ah ! that is what you never need fear ; I am delivered from women ; and, in the mind I am at present, I shall never seek them more. Whatever fine qualities I see in a girl, I am not sufficiently dazzled with her, to imagine her without faults : there is no woman without them. Where will you find one without caprice or ill-humour ? It is, sometimes, the loveliest outward appearance that conceals the greatest vices. Engracia, for example :—When I married my dear Engracia, she appeared all angelic sweetness : I was captivated. But after a time, throwing off constraint, she let me see she was violent and passionate : above all, if I contradicted her, she was a little devil : in short, she disgusted me with the sex ; and you may truly believe me in the assurance I confidently give you, that the god of marriage shall never rekindle his torch for me.”

“ You have convinced me,” said I to this gentleman ; “ and nothing shall now hinder me from accompanying you : I am ready to set out.”—“ And I also,” said he ;

“ I only came to Madrid to see the Court of the Catholic King: I have seen, and I admire, the magnificence of it: my curiosity is satisfied. I have, in the lodging where I am, a carriage and three good mules; we will take, if you please, to-morrow morning, the road to Burgos.”—“ I consent,” said I, “ provided you have no repugnance to take, as a companion of your journey, one who has escaped from the prisons of the Holy Office.” Ferrari could not help shaking with horror at hearing me speak in these terms. “ What do you say? Oh, heavens! explain yourself: have you had the misfortune to visit the horrible dungeons of the Holy Inquisition?” “ I was not there long,” said I; “ but I shall remember it all my life.”—“ And what occasion could you have given this tribunal to arrest you? Pray tell me this adventure.”

I gave him a faithful recital, which he heard with great attention: sometimes he could not help laughing, and sometimes expressing pity and indignation. When I had finished, “ I should find,” said he, “ this story very pleasant, if your trunk had

been restored to you ; but what can you do ? Confiscation is a received custom in all the Inquisitions : in Italy, even, you would not have been better treated : you must, therefore, console yourself for this disgrace ; after which, you cannot hesitate to quit Madrid.”—“ I do not hesitate at all,” said I, “ to accompany you ; I would rather be already in Burgos, where, being known to no one, I should not run the risk of meeting with those who could point their finger at me.”

I could not think, as you will suppose, of setting out without taking leave of my associates : I therefore went to them late in the evening, and told them, that having met, by chance, with a gentleman, an old friend of mine, who wished me to return to Burgos with him, I had consented ; and that on the following morning we should set out on our journey. “ I see plainly,” said the Señora Dalfa, “ that you are always a prey to fear and uneasiness : nothing obliges you to quit Madrid, where you might live with tranquillity, and not

think of trade ; but you see nothing but horrible phantoms, and we oppose your intentions in vain. We will deal fairly with you : go to Burgos : be assured, that in whatever part of the world you may be, we will always make a faithful reckoning with you of the profit of our society. Bernadina made me the same promise ; and these two ladies would oblige me to take a hundred pistoles in advance. Making, on all sides, a thousand protestations of friendship, I took leave of them, and returned to my hotel, where I supped with Ferrari, who said, “ I shall come to you to-morrow morning : hold yourself ready to set out.”

He did not fail. Scarce was it day-break, when I saw arrive in the court a handsome carriage, drawn by two good mules, on one of which was a postillion ; and a footman, mounted on a third mule, followed. Our baggage consisted of a large portmanteau, which contained the clothes of Ferrari ; and a small one, in which was the linen the ladies had given me, was tied behind : this was the style in which we set out for Burgos.

We slept the first night at Paular, the second at Aranda de Duero, and the third at Valladolid; where we stopped to see a city, which had often had the honour of being a royal residence. The fifth day, we happily arrived at the house of Ferrari, situated a quarter of a league from Burgos, on the side of the plain of Hontoria.

If this mansion did not appear superb, it, at least, had no symptoms of going to decay. It appeared well kept up; the owner drawing annually from it six thousand ducats. The interior corresponded with the exterior: there was no magnificence, neither was there any thing parsimonious; all was well furnished: the gardens were very handsome; and he had also a large park, where you might take the diversion of hunting.

I could not be situated any-where more suitable to the disposition I found myself in. Although I could no longer fear the Inquisition, I felt, from time to time, in spite of myself, emotions of horror arise in my soul, as if I had seen the Familiars at my

books. In short, I led the life of a hare; but, far from allowing any one to see what was passing in me, I assumed a resolution, and appeared always lively. By this means, I made myself pleasing to the company to whom Ferrari presented me; and all his friends soon became mine. We had two, in particular, for whom I felt, from the first, a great liking; and we equally pleased each other, though our characters were very different. One was named Don Sebastian de Rodillas, and the other Don Matthias de Grajal. These gentlemen lived in the environs of Burgos, both nearly the same age, that is to say, from thirty-five to forty, rich in honour, and poor in wealth. They lived in their cottages; and, by hunting, and strict economy, kept up their nobility well. If they were not in a state to entertain their friends magnificently, they received them in a manner which made up for all deficiencies: besides which, they were sensible men, and of pleasing manners.

We all passed our time very happily with Ferrari, who thought himself very fortunate

to have these two cavaliers for neighbors. We went sometimes to visit them. One day when we were dining with Don Sebastian, there came on a sudden into the room a young man with a great staff in his hand, and a tattered garment, with a long thick black beard. The sight of him made me think of my coming out of the Inquisition, and of my flame-painted habit. However, notwithstanding his miserable clothes, and his frightful appearance, Don Sebastian no sooner looked upon him, than he recollected him, and exclaimed, "Living God! behold my brother, Don Joachim! I know him, in spite of his tatters and long beard."—"Yes, my brother!" said the young man, "it is I who stand before you. You need not be astonished to see me in this state; for I am a poor devil, just arrived from Barbary, after five years of slavery, and have no better dress to appear in."—"However deplorable the situation I find thee in," said Don Sebastian, "I bless Heaven, a thousand and a thousand times, for having, at last, restored thee to my heart." In saying these words, he rose from table, with transport

to embrace his brother, who, on his side, ~~was~~ equally pleased and affected.

After they had mutually embraced in the most affectionate manner, Don Sebastian presented Don Joachim to us. Ferrari, Don Matthias, and myself, embraced him; and congratulated him on his return to Burgos. We could plainly perceive, by the manner in which he returned our compliments, that he did not want for sense. He sat down to table with us. We expected to see in him a famished traveller; but, instead of falling greedily upon the dishes with which the table was covered, he was very temperate, and only ate a few mouthfuls. Ferrari, astonished at his temperance, said, "For a man who appears to have travelled far, you have not much appetite."—"True," said Don Sebastian, "and it surprises me also." "Brother," said Don Joachim, "consider the joy I feel at now beholding you; a moment so often wished for!"—"Not less wished for on my part," said Don Sebastian. "It is seven years since you went hence to go to St. Jaques of Compostella, with the

intention of performing a vow that you made when sick: I have never heard of you since our separation. What prevented your returning home after the accomplishment of your vow? What have you been doing for these seven years past? and whence come you now?"—"From Algiers," said Don Joachim; from that city so fatal to Christians, and which may well be called, The Abode of Inhumanity. You will find, however, by the account I have to give you," said he, "that I have bit the bridle less than most people in my situation."—"Will you relate it before these gentlemen? they will be happy to hear you," said our host. "Yes, willingly," said Don Joachim. "You are here amongst friends," said Don Matthias: let us have the recital of your adventures; you cannot have auditors who will feel more interested than ourselves."—"I will then, Señor Cavalier," said the captive, "relate to you the history of my slavery: it is singular enough." He then began as follows.
